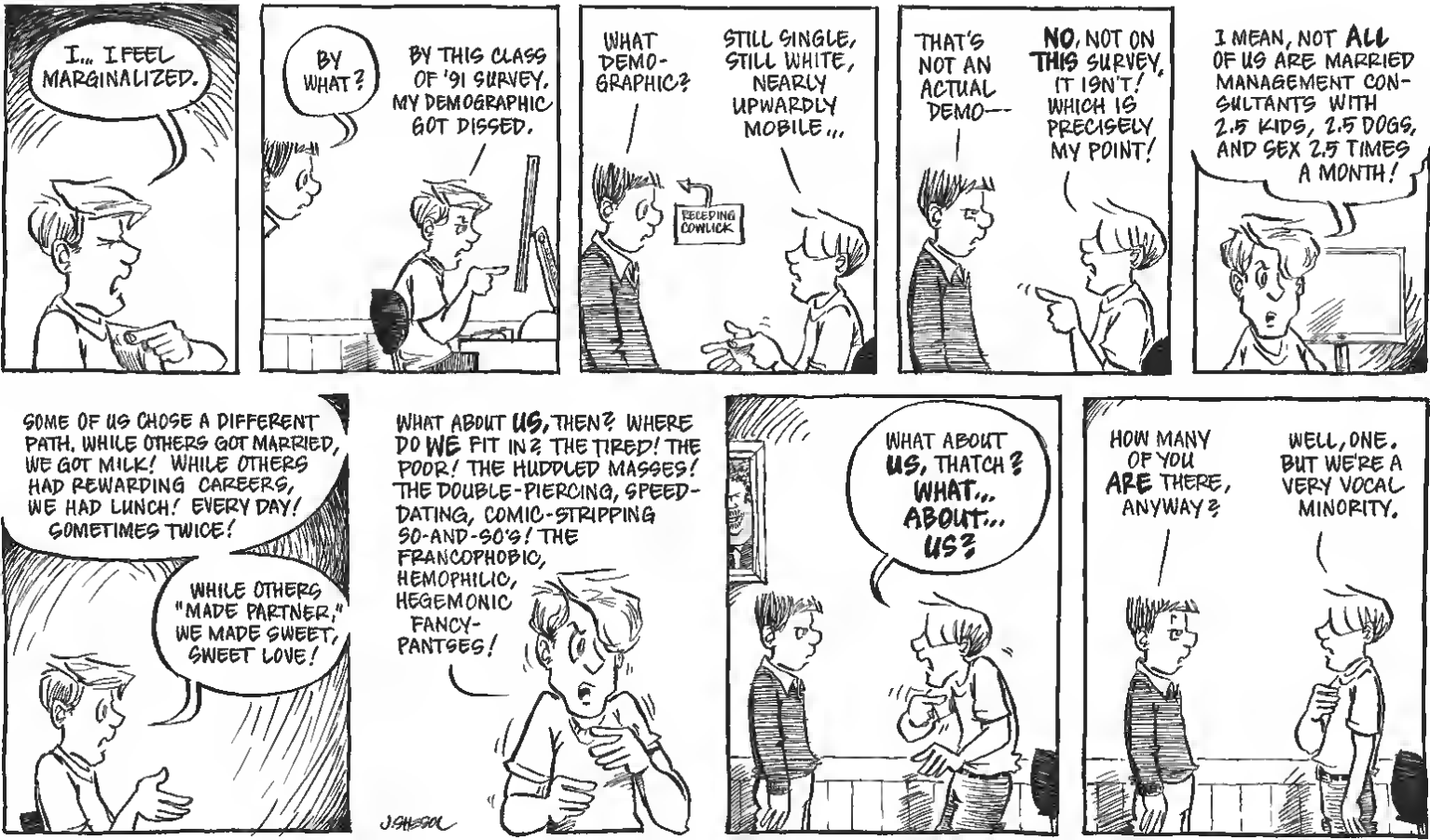
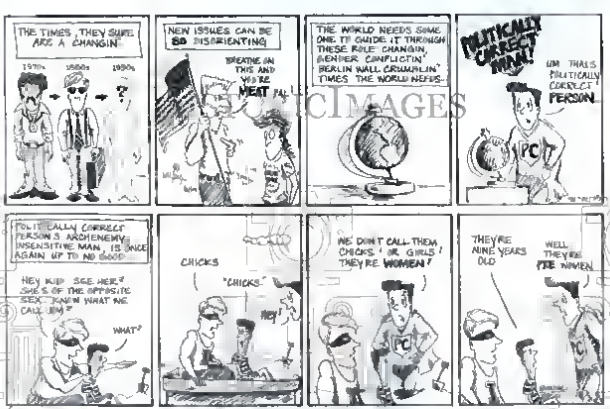
THATCH-HEAD REVISITED


I... I FEEL MARGINALIZED.
BY WHAT?
BY THIS CLASS OF '91 SURVEY. MY DEMOGRAPHIC GOT DISSED.
WHAT DEMO-GRAPHIC?
RECEDING COWLICK
STILL SINGLE, STILL WHITE, NEARLY UPWARDLY MOBILE...
THAT'S NOT AN ACTUAL DEMO—
NO, NOT ON THIS SURVEY, IT ISN'T! WHICH IS PRECISELY MY POINT!
I MEAN, NOT ALL OF US ARE MARRIED MANAGEMENT CONSULTANTS WITH 2.5 KIDS, 2.5 DOGS, AND SEX 2.5 TIMES A MONTH!
SOME OF US CHOSE A DIFFERENT PATH. WHILE OTHERS GOT MARRIED, WE GOT MILK! WHILE OTHERS HAD REWARDING CAREERS, WE HAD LUNCH! EVERY DAY! SOMETIMES TWICE!
WHILE OTHERS "MADE PARTNER," WE MADE SWEET, SWEET LOVE!
WHAT ABOUT US, THEN? WHERE DO WE FIT IN? THE TIRED! THE POOR! THE HUDDLED MASSES! THE DOUBLE-PIERCING, SPEED-DATING, COMIC-STRIPPING SO-AND-SO'S! THE FRANCOPHOBIC, HEMOPHILIC, HEGEMONIC FANCY-PANTSES!
JGHIGGOL
WHAT ABOUT US, THATCH? WHAT... ABOUT... US?
HOW MANY OF YOU ARE THERE, ANYWAY?
WELL, ONE. BUT WE'RE A VERY VOCAL MINORITY.


THE TIMES, THEY SURE ARE A CHANGIN'
1970s
1980s
1990s
?
NEW ISSUES CAN BE SO INSPIRIENTING
TREATING ON THIS AND YOU'RE MEAT PAL
THE WORLD NEEDS SOME ONE TO GUIDE IT THROUGH THESE ROLE CHANGIN, GENDER CONFLICTIN' BERLIN WALL CRUMBLIN' TIMES THE WORLD NEEDS...
POLITICALLY CORRECT MAN?
UM THATS POLITICALLY CORRECT PERSON
POLITICALLY CORRECT PERSON'S ARCHENEMY, INSENSITIVE MAN, IS ONCE AGAIN UP TO NO GOOD
HEY KID SEE HER? SHE'S OF THE OPPOSITE SEX. KNOW WHAT WE CALL EM?
WHAT?
CHICKS
"CHICKS"
HEY!
WE DON'T CALL THEM CHICKS OR GIRLS! THEY'RE WOMEN!
THEY'RE NINE YEARS OLD
WELL THEY'RE PRE WOMEN

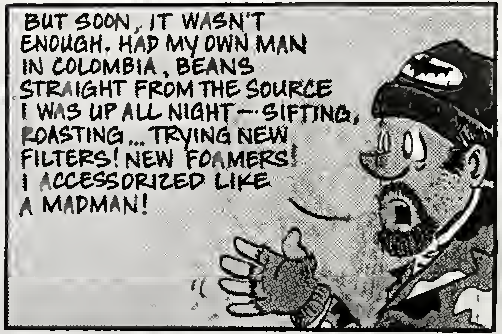
From the book THATCH : Featuring Politically Correct Person, by Jeff Shonel (Vintage, April, 1991)

This photo may only be used in connection with the review or promotion of the Vintage edition of THATCH : Featuring Politically Correct Person
All other uses are prohibited.

THATCH

BY JEFF SHESOL

IN THOSE DAYS IT WAS JUST A TWO-CUP-A-DAY HABIT, MAYBE THE OCCASIONAL MOCHA. BUT IT'S DIFFERENT OUT HERE, MAN... SO MANY BLENDS! I WAS LIKE A KID IN A CANDY STORE! OVERWHELMED!

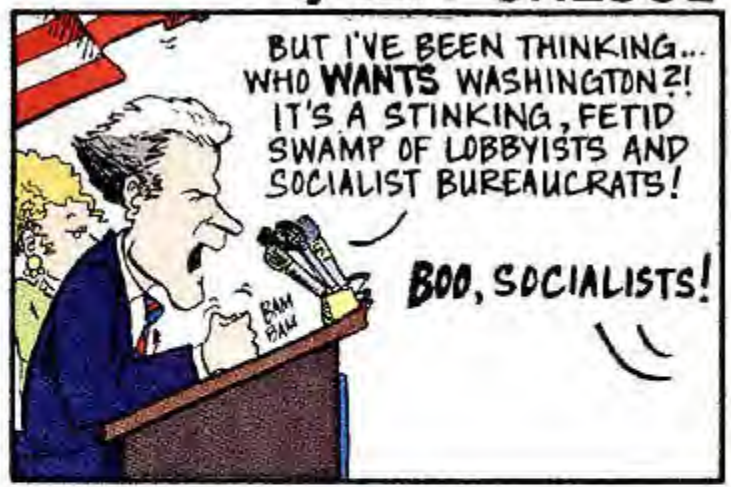

BUT SOON, IT WASN'T ENOUGH. HAD MY OWN MAN IN COLOMBIA, BEANS STRAIGHT FROM THE SOURCE I WAS UP ALL NIGHT — SIFTING, ROASTING... TRYING NEW FILTERS! NEW FOAMERS! I ACCESSORIZED LIKE A MADMAN!

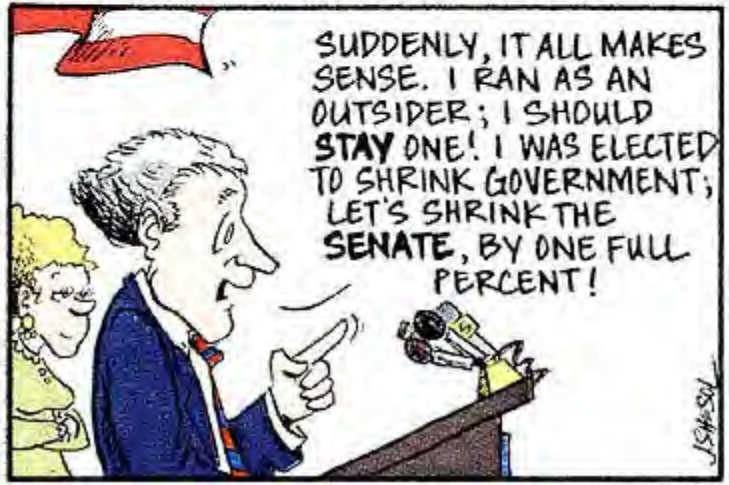
I LOST IT. LOST MY JOB, LOST CONTROL... EVERYTHING. NOW I GRUB FOR A LOW-GRADE FIX — A PINCH OF "CAFÉ VIENNA" HERE, DECAF "SEMESTER IN PARIS" THERE...

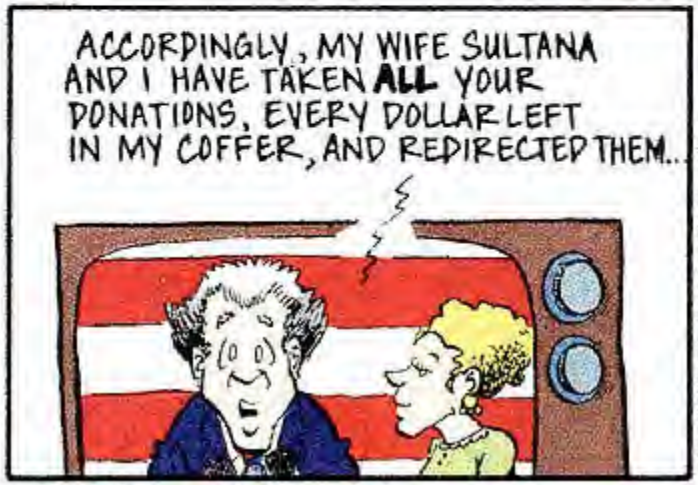
THATCH

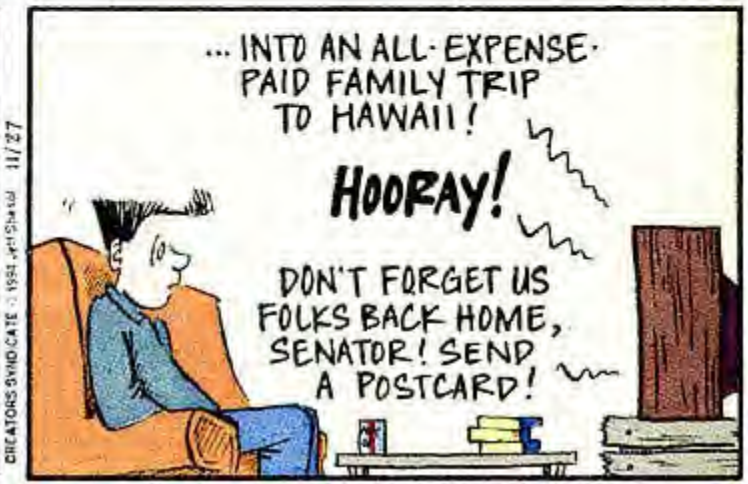
By JEFF SHESOL

WHEN YOU ELECTED ME, BIFF BLANKTON, AS YOUR NEW SENATOR THREE WEEKS AGO, YOU TOLD ME TO "TAKE BACK WASHINGTON"!
TAKE BACK WASHINGTON! TAKE BACK WASHINGTON!
e-mail: thatch94@aol.com


BUT I'VE BEEN THINKING... WHO WANTS WASHINGTON?! IT'S A STINKING, FETID SWAMP OF LOBBYISTS AND SOCIALIST BUREAUCRATS!
BOO, SOCIALISTS!


SUDDENLY, IT ALL MAKES SENSE. I RAN AS AN OUTSIDER; I SHOULD STAY ONE! I WAS ELECTED TO SHRINK GOVERNMENT; LET'S SHRINK THE SENATE, BY ONE FULL PERCENT!


ACCORDINGLY, MY WIFE SULTANA AND I HAVE TAKEN ALL YOUR DONATIONS, EVERY DOLLAR LEFT IN MY COFFER, AND REDIRECTED THEM...
CREATORS SYND. CATE. © 1994 Jeff Shesol 11/27

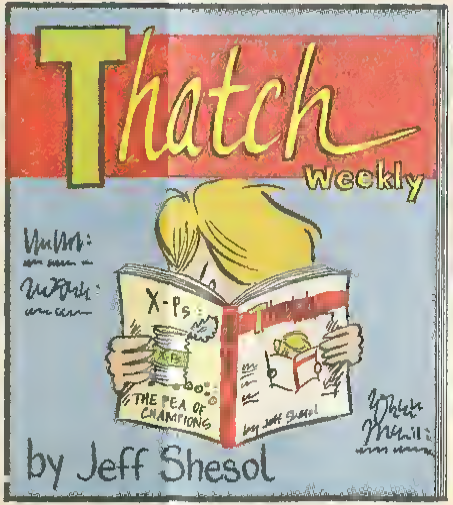


THATCH
by
JEFF SHESOL
Stripper's Guide Scan
SO WHADDYA SAY-- CHINESE FOOD TONIGHT? A LITTLE "DRAGON SOUP," PERCHANCE?
UM... I'M NOT REALLY COMFORTABLE WITH THAT POLITICALLY.
WHAT THE HECK DOES THAT MEAN?
IT'S THIS HUMAN RIGHTS THING. I FIND IT A LITTLE... UNSETTLING.
OK, HOW ABOUT INDIAN FOOD?
OH, JEEZ. THERE'S A WHOLE COLONIAL LEGACY THERE. MAKES ME QUEASY.
RUSSIAN? POLISH?
UM.. I'M AFRAID "SHOCK THERAPY" HAS CULINARY AS WELL AS ECONOMIC IMPLICATIONS...
FINE, THEN!
YOU PICK THE PLACE -- WHATEVER PLEASES YOUR FICKLE POLITICAL PALATE!
HAPPY, NOW?
ACTUALLY, WITH THE UPS AND DOWNS IN CLINTON'S APPROVAL RA--
OH, STUFF IT.

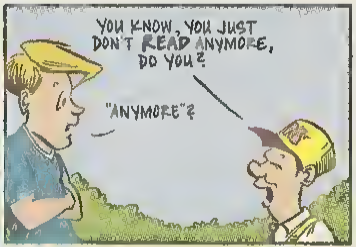
THATCH

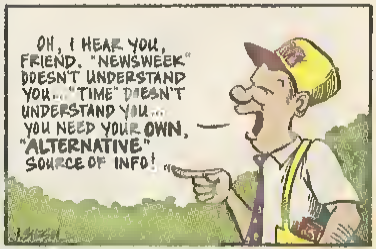
by JEFF SHESOL

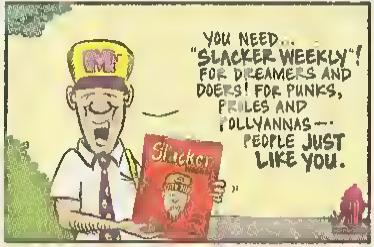
WE, MY FRIENDS, ARE THE ORPHANS OF THE HOLIDAY SEASON -- THE FORSAKEN AND FORGOTTEN.
WE'RE TOO OLD TO GO HOME AND SPEND EACH HOLIDAY WITH THE FOLKS, BUT TOO YOUNG TO REVEL IN FAMILY BLISS OF OUR OWN MAKING.

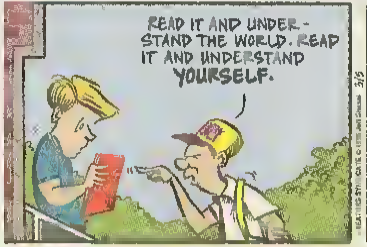

Thatch
Weekly
X-Ps
THE PEA OF CHAMPIONS
by Jeff Shesol

OH YOU AGAIN
YES — IT'S ME AGAIN, MY "GEN X" FRIEND!


YOU KNOW, YOU JUST DON'T READ ANYMORE, DO YOU?
"ANYMORE"?

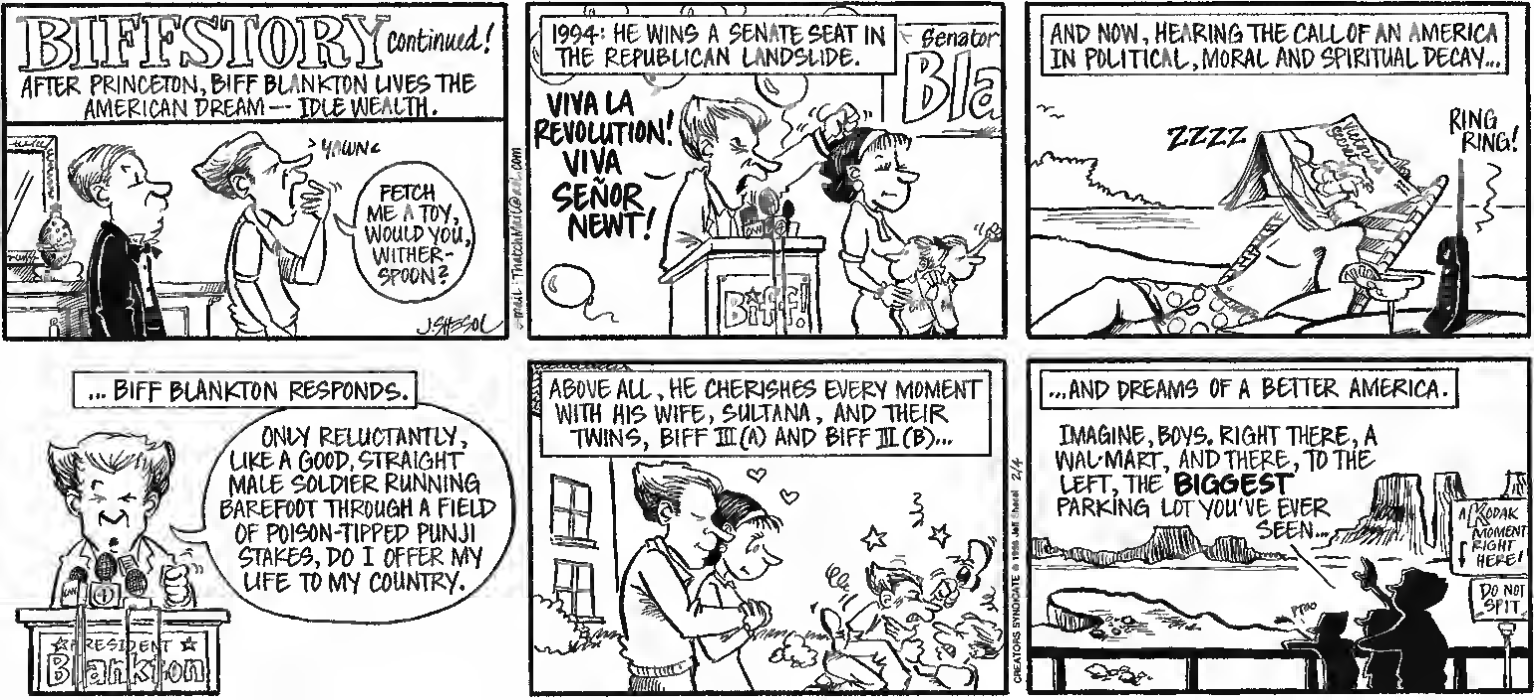

OH, I HEAR YOU, FRIEND. "NEWSWEEK" DOESN'T UNDERSTAND YOU... "TIME" DOESN'T UNDERSTAND YOU... YOU NEED YOUR OWN, "ALTERNATIVE" SOURCE OF INFO!


YOU NEED... "SLACKER WEEKLY"! FOR DREAMERS AND DOERS! FOR PUNKS, PRILES AND POLLYANNAS — PEOPLE JUST LIKE YOU.
Slacker

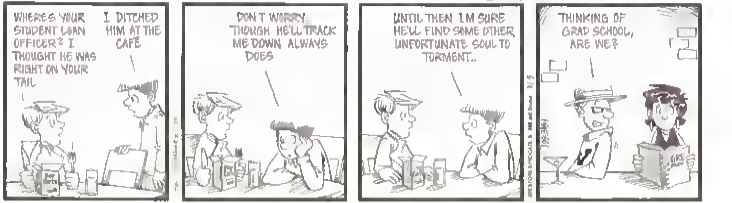

READ IT AND UNDERSTAND THE WORLD. READ IT AND UNDERSTAND YOURSELF.

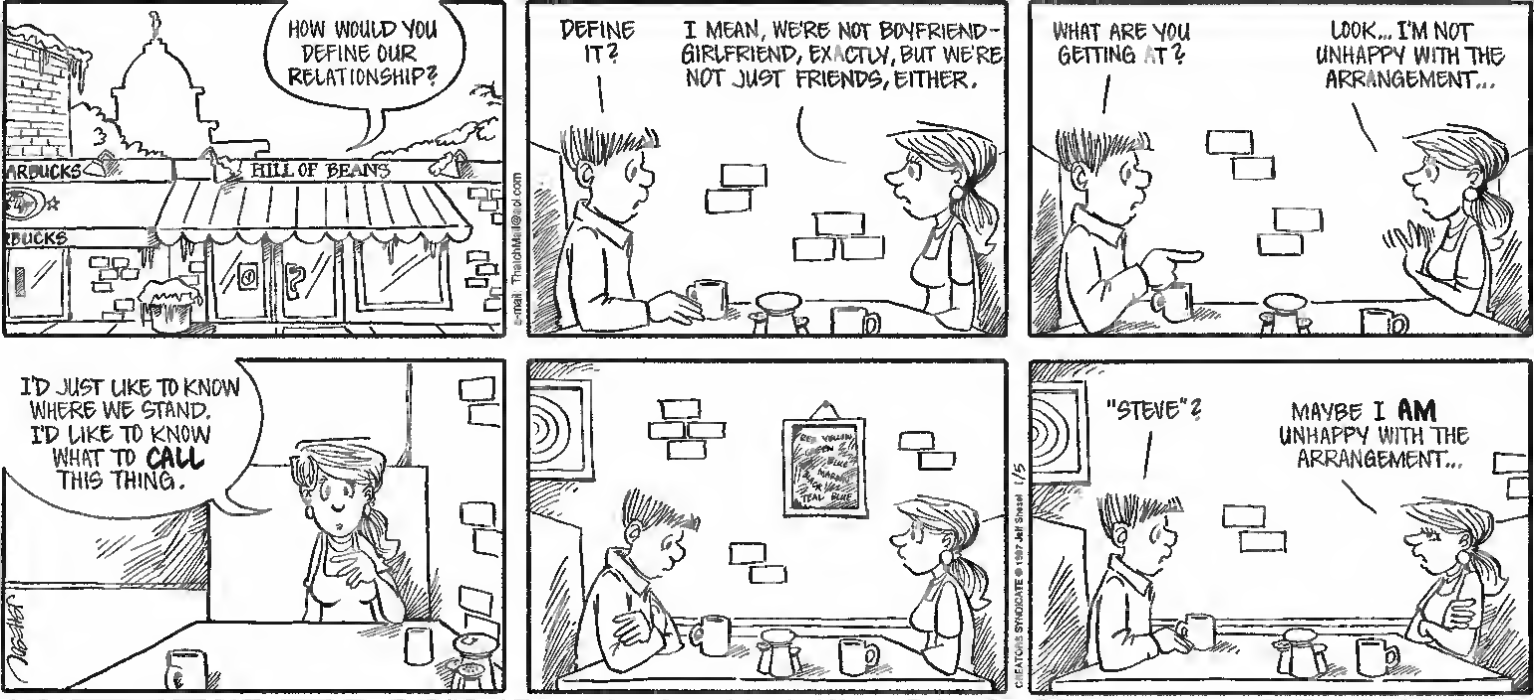
DREW BARRYMORE GOT A NEW BODY PIERCING.
REALLY!

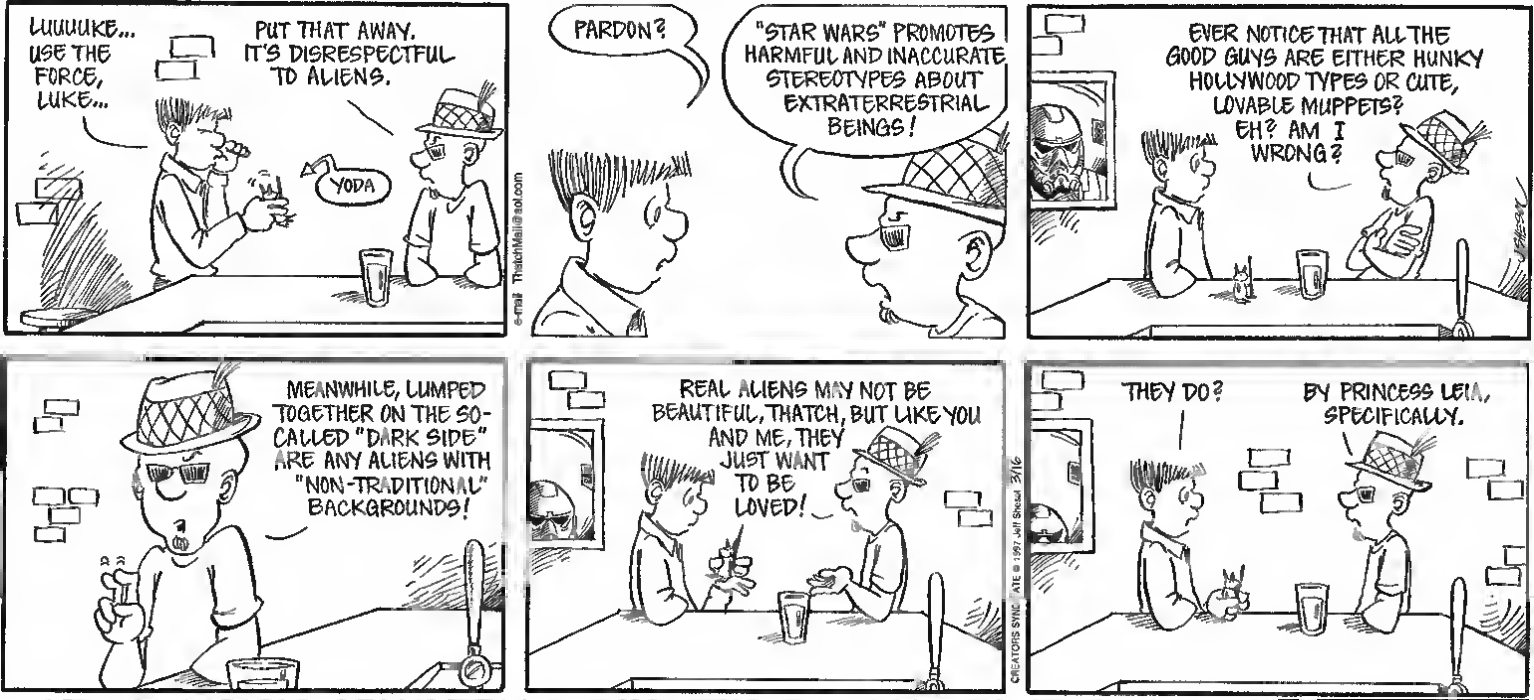
TONIGHT... ON GOP TV! AN EXCLUSIVE, ADVANCE SCREENING... "BIFFSTORY"! THE BIFF BLANKTON CAMPAIGN VIDEO!
BIFFSTORY
DUM DUM DA-DA-DA DUM
Blan '96
©mail: ThatchMail@aol.com
1956: BABY BIFF IS KISSED BY VICE PRESIDENT DICK NIXON—THE BESTOWAL OF A POLITICAL LEGACY.
IKE
ECCH! WHAT'S THE KID GOT IN THE BOTTLE-- "WILD TURKEY"?
YOUNG BIFF IS A FOE OF BIG GOVERNMENT FROM THE GET-GO.
FWEET!
I WILL NOT YIELD TO PEDESTRIANS.
XING GUARD
LIL' CHOPPER
PUTTER PUTTER
AS A CIVIC-MINDED TEEN, BIFF TEACHES A BETTER BACKHAND TO DISADVANTAGED YOUTH.
ALEXIS, I WAS SO SORRY TO HEAR YOUR PONY DIED.
SNIFF
PAT PAT
TENNIS ELBOW KEEPS HIM OUT OF VIETNAM...
'96
JULY
DOES IT HURT WHEN I DO THIS?
UM, SURE. YES. OUCH.
JSHESOL
...BUT HE SERVES HIS COUNTRY PROUDLY ON THE HOMEFRONT.
HIPPIES? CERTAINLY, SIRS. THEY WENT THATAWAY.
SUPPORT OUR BOMBS
NEXT: DUTY CALLS! LIST CALLS!
CREATORS SYNDICATE © 1996 Jeff Shesol 1/28

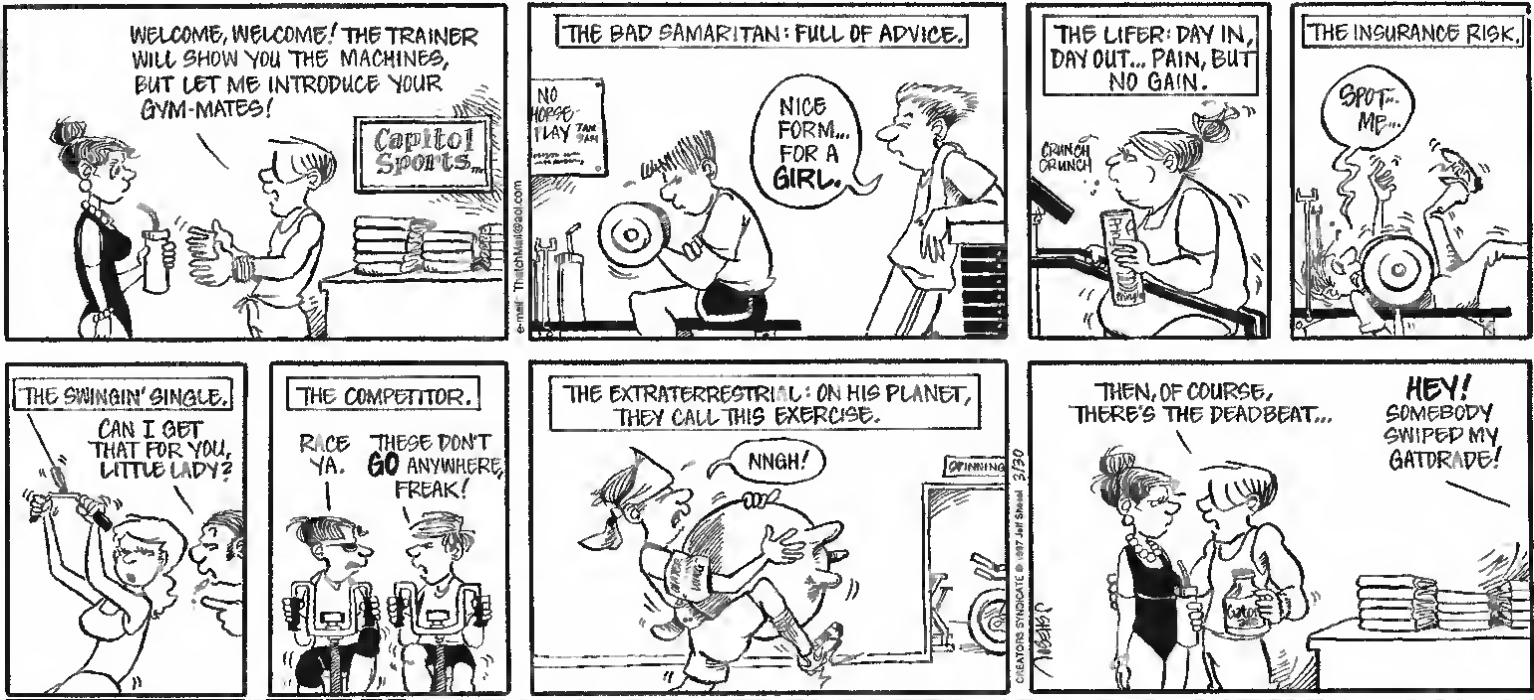

BIFFSTORY continued!
AFTER PRINCETON, BIFF BLANKTON LIVES THE AMERICAN DREAM — IDLE WEALTH.
YAWN
FETCH ME A TOY, WOULD YOU, WITHERSPOON?
J.STEGOL
1994: HE WINS A SENATE SEAT IN THE REPUBLICAN LANDSLIDE.
Senator Bla
VIVA LA REVOLUTION! VIVA SEÑOR NEWT!
Biff!
AND NOW, HEARING THE CALL OF AN AMERICA IN POLITICAL, MORAL AND SPIRITUAL DECAY...
ZZZZ
RING RING!
... BIFF BLANKTON RESPONDS.
ONLY RELUCTANTLY, LIKE A GOOD, STRAIGHT MALE SOLDIER RUNNING BAREFOOT THROUGH A FIELD OF POISON-TIPPED PUNJI STAKES, DO I OFFER MY LIFE TO MY COUNTRY.
PRESIDENT Blankton
ABOVE ALL, HE CHERISHES EVERY MOMENT WITH HIS WIFE, SULTANA, AND THEIR TWINS, BIFF III(A) AND BIFF III(B)...
...AND DREAMS OF A BETTER AMERICA.
IMAGINE, BOYS. RIGHT THERE, A WAL-MART, AND THERE, TO THE LEFT, THE BIGGEST PARKING LOT YOU'VE EVER SEEN...
A KODAK MOMENT RIGHT HERE!
DO NOT SPIT
PTOO
CREATORS SYNDICATE © 1995 JME
2/4

THATCH by Jeff Shesol


WHERE'S YOUR STUDENT LOAN OFFICER? I THOUGHT HE WAS RIGHT ON YOUR TAIL
I DITCHED HIM AT THE CAFE
DON'T WORRY, THOUGH. HE'LL TRACK ME DOWN. ALWAYS DOES
UNTIL THEN, I'M SURE HE'LL FIND SOME OTHER UNFORTUNATE SOUL TO TORMENT...
THINKING OF GRAD SCHOOL, ARE WE?


HOW WOULD YOU DEFINE OUR RELATIONSHIP?
HILL OF BEANS
e-mail: ThatsMeIll@aol.com
DEFINE IT?
I MEAN, WE'RE NOT BOYFRIEND-GIRLFRIEND, EXACTLY, BUT WE'RE NOT JUST FRIENDS, EITHER.
WHAT ARE YOU GETTING AT?
LOOK... I'M NOT UNHAPPY WITH THE ARRANGEMENT...
I'D JUST LIKE TO KNOW WHERE WE STAND. I'D LIKE TO KNOW WHAT TO CALL THIS THING.
"STEVE"?
MAYBE I AM UNHAPPY WITH THE ARRANGEMENT...
©FEATURES SYNDICATE © 1997 Jeff Stissel 1/5


LUUUUKE... USE THE FORCE, LUKE...
PUT THAT AWAY. IT'S DISRESPECTFUL TO ALIENS.
YODA
e-mail: ThatchMail@aol.com
PARDON?
"STAR WARS" PROMOTES HARMFUL AND INACCURATE STEREOTYPES ABOUT EXTRATERRESTRIAL BEINGS!
EVER NOTICE THAT ALL THE GOOD GUYS ARE EITHER HUNKY HOLLYWOOD TYPES OR CUTE, LOVABLE MUPPETS? EH? AM I WRONG?
MEANWHILE, LUMPED TOGETHER ON THE SO-CALLED "DARK SIDE" ARE ANY ALIENS WITH "NON-TRADITIONAL" BACKGROUNDS!
REAL ALIENS MAY NOT BE BEAUTIFUL, THATCH, BUT LIKE YOU AND ME, THEY JUST WANT TO BE LOVED!
CREATORS SYNDICATE © 1997 Jeff Stokel 3/16
THEY DO?
BY PRINCESS LEIA, SPECIFICALLY.


WELCOME, WELCOME! THE TRAINER WILL SHOW YOU THE MACHINES, BUT LET ME INTRODUCE YOUR GYM-MATES!
Capitol Sports
THE BAD SAMARITAN: FULL OF ADVICE.
NO HORSE PLAY
NICE FORM... FOR A GIRL.
e-mail: ThatchMail@aol.com
THE LIFER: DAY IN, DAY OUT... PAIN, BUT NO GAIN.
CRUNCH CRUNCH
THE INSURANCE RISK.
SPOT ME...
THE SWINGIN' SINGLE.
CAN I GET THAT FOR YOU, LITTLE LADY?
THE COMPETITOR.
RACE YA.
THESE DON'T GO ANYWHERE, FREAK!
THE EXTRATERRESTRIAL: ON HIS PLANET, THEY CALL THIS EXERCISE.
NNGH!
OPENING
3/30
CREATORS SYNDICATE © 1997 Jeff Stahl
THEN, OF COURSE, THERE'S THE DEADBEAT...
HEY! SOMEBODY SWIPED MY GATORADE!

10/17

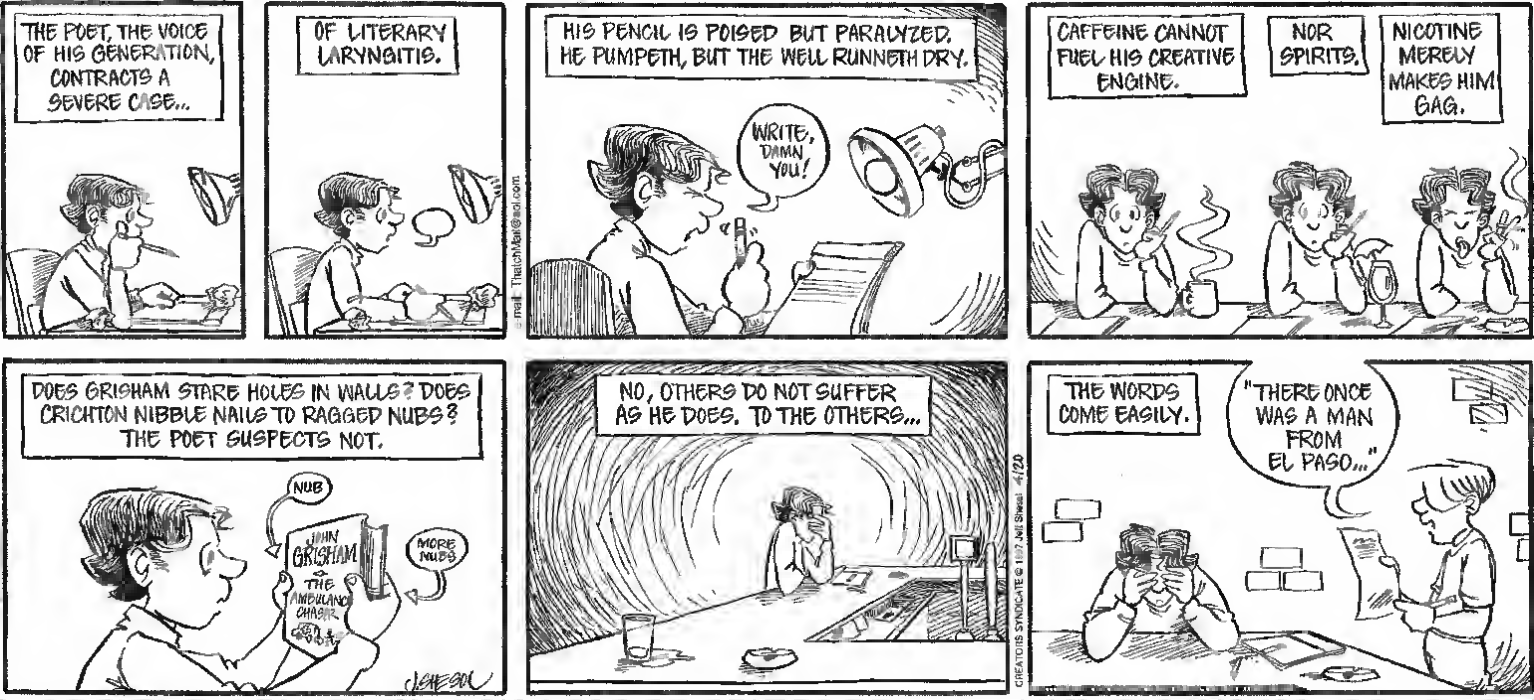
Dear Mr Huscha —

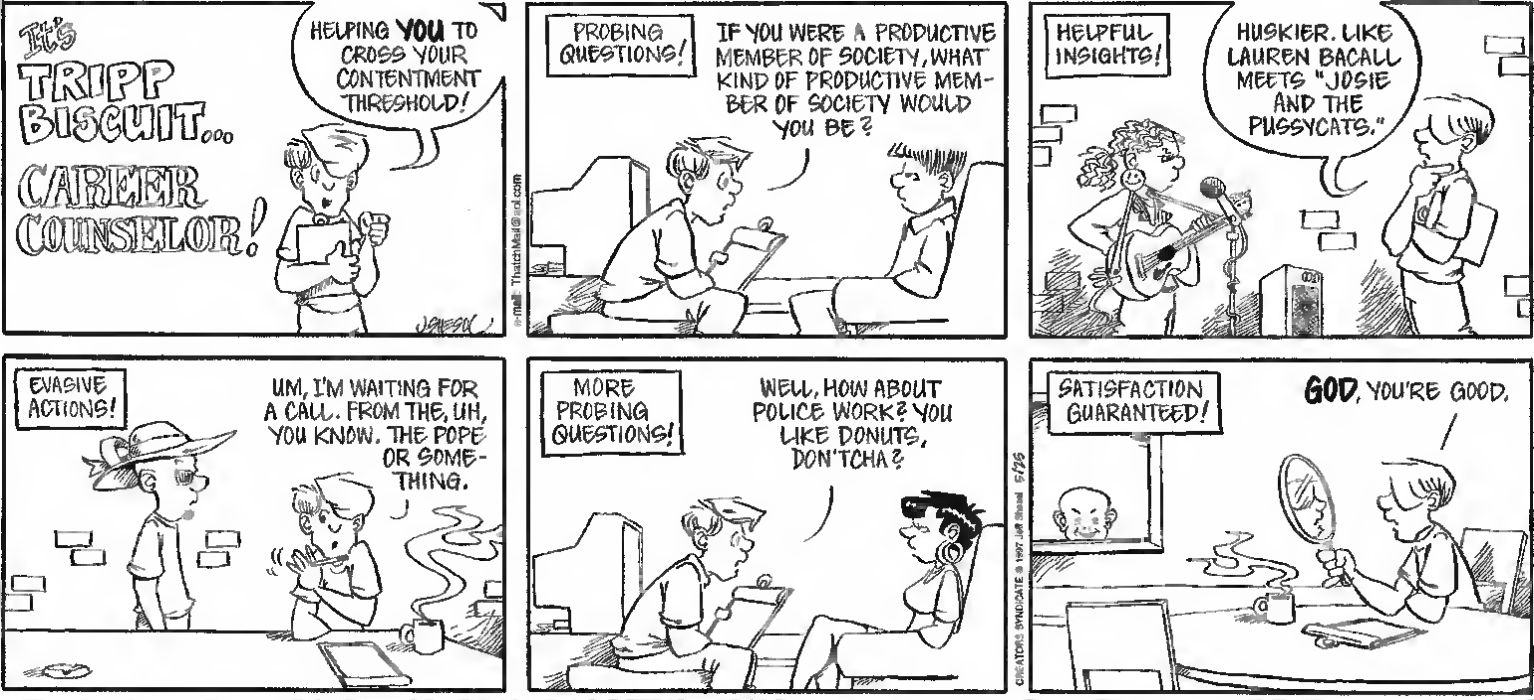
Thanks for your kind letter. I'm more interesting than the cartoonists typical lot.

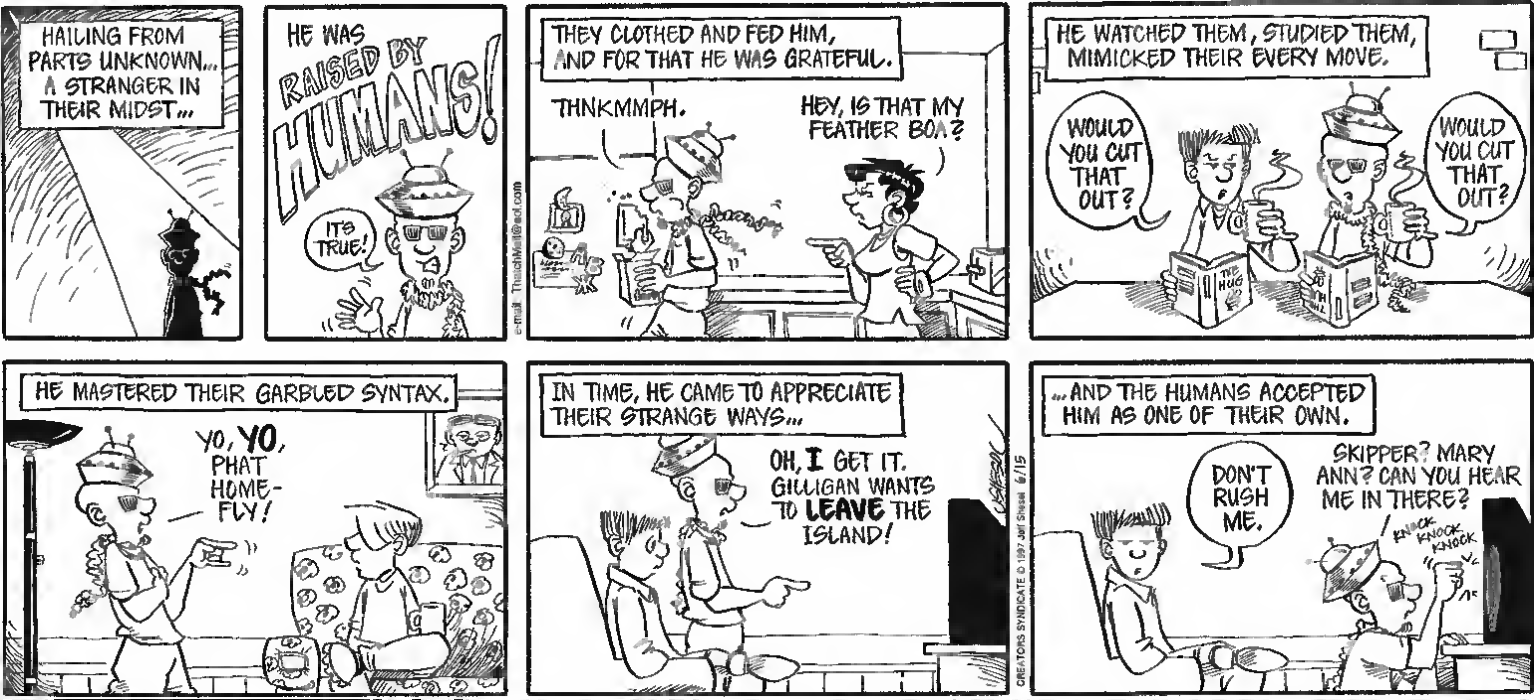
As for the breast feeding Madonna by Cezon, she's perhaps taken a wee bit too far in the imagination.

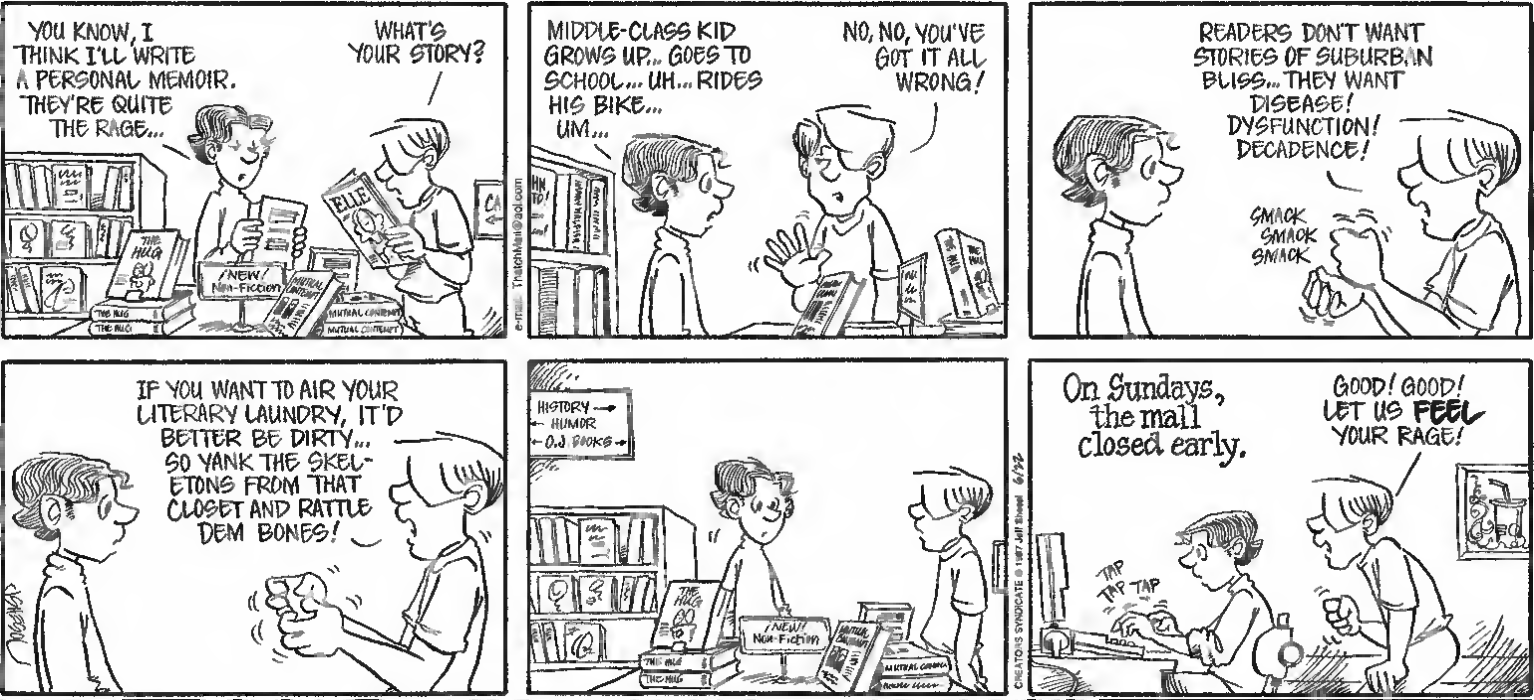
Thanks again for writing.

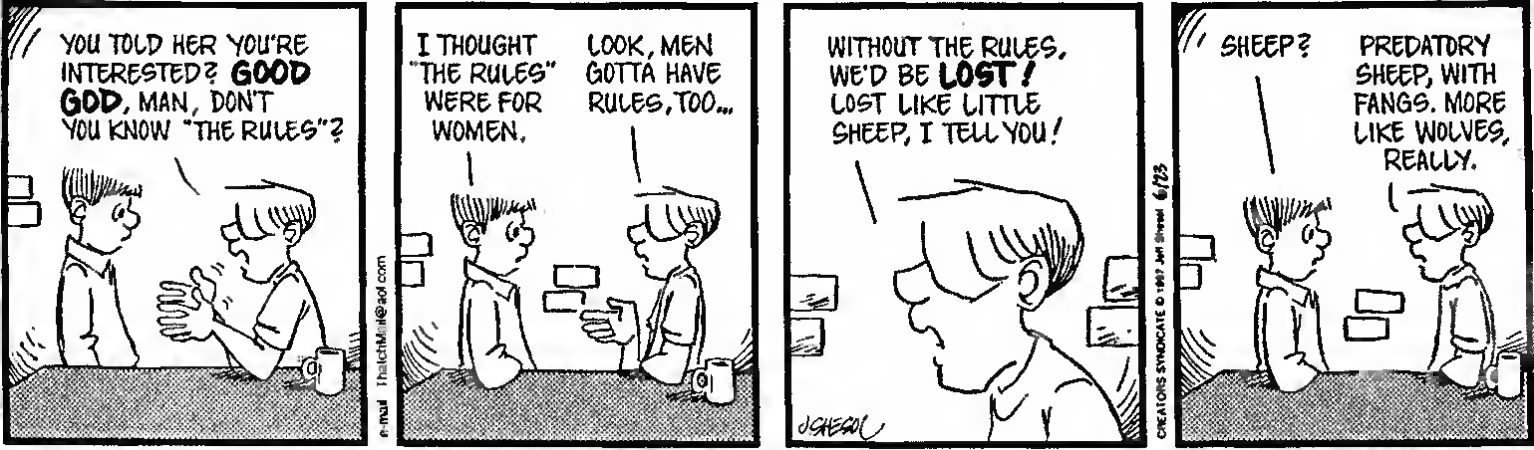
yours


THE POET, THE VOICE OF HIS GENERATION, CONTRACTS A SEVERE CASE...
OF LITERARY LARYNGITIS.
HIS PENCIL IS POISED BUT PARALYZED. HE PUMPETH, BUT THE WELL RUNNETH DRY.
WRITE, DAMN YOU!
CAFFEINE CANNOT FUEL HIS CREATIVE ENGINE.
NOR SPIRITS.
NICOTINE MERELY MAKES HIM GAG.
DOES GRISHAM STARE HOLES IN WALLS? DOES CRICHTON NIBBLE NAILS TO RAGGED NUBS? THE POET SUSPECTS NOT.
NUB
JOHN GRISHAM = THE AMBULANCE CHASER
MORE NUBS
NO, OTHERS DO NOT SUFFER AS HE DOES. TO THE OTHERS...
THE WORDS COME EASILY.
"THERE ONCE WAS A MAN FROM EL PASO..."
mail: ThatchMail@aol.com
CREATORS SYNDICATE © 1997 Jeff Stahl 4/20

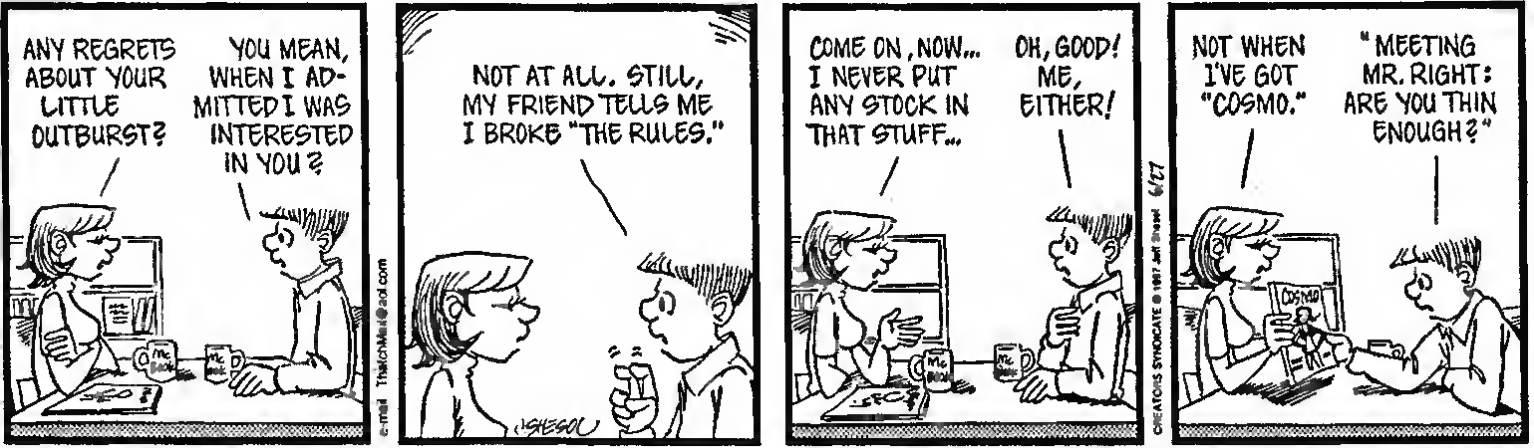

It's TRIPP BISCUIT... CAREER COUNSELOR!
HELPING YOU TO CROSS YOUR CONTENTMENT THRESHOLD!
PROBING QUESTIONS!
IF YOU WERE A PRODUCTIVE MEMBER OF SOCIETY, WHAT KIND OF PRODUCTIVE MEMBER OF SOCIETY WOULD YOU BE?
HELPFUL INSIGHTS!
HUSKIER. LIKE LAUREN BACALL MEETS "JOSIE AND THE PUSSYCATS."
EVASIVE ACTIONS!
UM, I'M WAITING FOR A CALL. FROM THE, UH, YOU KNOW. THE POPE OR SOMETHING.
MORE PROBING QUESTIONS!
WELL, HOW ABOUT POLICE WORK? YOU LIKE DONUTS, DON'TCHA?
SATISFACTION GUARANTEED!
GOD, YOU'RE GOOD.


HAILING FROM PARTS UNKNOWN... A STRANGER IN THEIR MIDST...
HE WAS RAISED BY HUMANS!
IT'S TRUE!
e-mail: ThatsMeWill@aol.com
THEY CLOTHED AND FED HIM, AND FOR THAT HE WAS GRATEFUL.
THNKMMPH.
HEY, IS THAT MY FEATHER BOA?
HE WATCHED THEM, STUDIED THEM, MIMICKED THEIR EVERY MOVE.
WOULD YOU CUT THAT OUT?
THE HUG
WOULD YOU CUT THAT OUT?
HE MASTERED THEIR GARBLED SYNTAX.
YO, YO, PHAT HOME-FLY!
IN TIME, HE CAME TO APPRECIATE THEIR STRANGE WAYS...
OH, I GET IT. GILLIGAN WANTS TO LEAVE THE ISLAND!
CREATORS SYNDICATE © 1997 Jeff Stahl 6/15
...AND THE HUMANS ACCEPTED HIM AS ONE OF THEIR OWN.
DON'T RUSH ME.
SKIPPER? MARY ANN? CAN YOU HEAR ME IN THERE?
KNOCK KNOCK KNOCK


YOU KNOW, I THINK I'LL WRITE A PERSONAL MEMOIR. THEY'RE QUITE THE RAGE...
WHAT'S YOUR STORY?
/NEW/ NON-FICTION
MUTUAL CONTEMPT
MIDDLE-CLASS KID GROWS UP... GOES TO SCHOOL... UH... RIDES HIS BIKE... UM...
NO, NO, YOU'VE GOT IT ALL WRONG!
READERS DON'T WANT STORIES OF SUBURBAN BLISS... THEY WANT DISEASE! DYSFUNCTION! DECADENCE!
SMACK SMACK SMACK
IF YOU WANT TO AIR YOUR LITERARY LAUNDRY, IT'D BETTER BE DIRTY... SO YANK THE SKELETONS FROM THAT CLOSET AND RATTLE DEM BONES!
HISTORY
HUMOR
O.J. BOOKS
/NEW/ NON-FICTION
On Sundays, the mall closed early.
GOOD! GOOD! LET US FEEL YOUR RAGE!
TAP TAP TAP
e-mail: ThatchMail@aol.com
CREATORS SYNDICATE © 1997 Jeff Stahl 6/22


YOU TOLD HER YOU'RE INTERESTED? GOOD GOD, MAN, DON'T YOU KNOW "THE RULES"?
I THOUGHT "THE RULES" WERE FOR WOMEN.
LOOK, MEN GOTTA HAVE RULES, TOO...
WITHOUT THE RULES, WE'D BE LOST! LOST LIKE LITTLE SHEEP, I TELL YOU!
SHEEP?
PREDATORY SHEEP, WITH FANGS. MORE LIKE WOLVES, REALLY.
e-mail ThatchMan@aol.com
JSHESOL
CREATORS SYNDICATE © 1997 Jeff Shesol 6/23

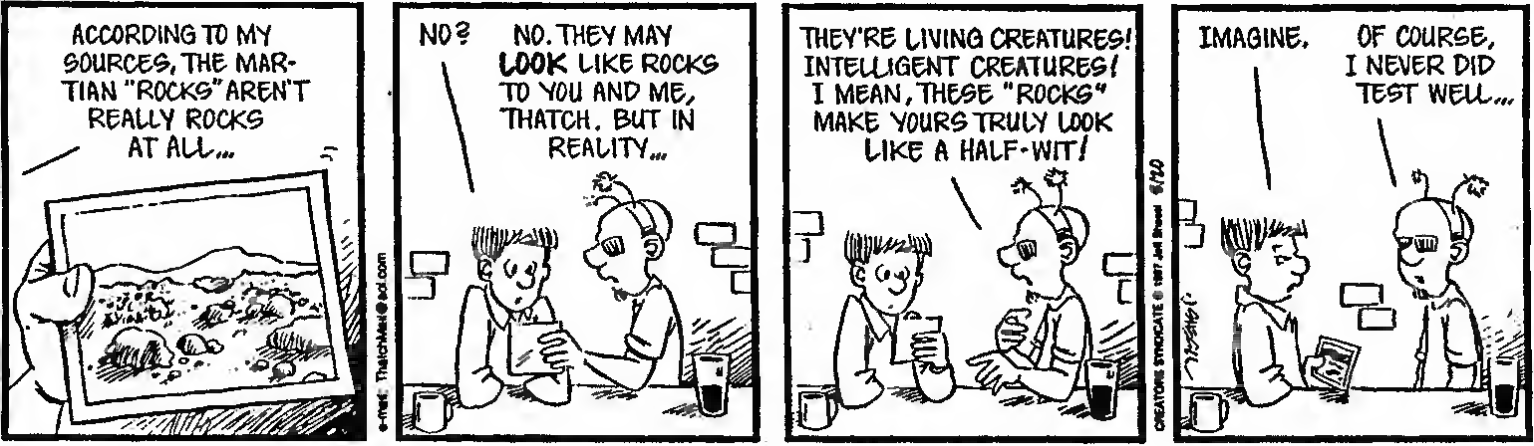
ANYWAY, WHEN I TOLD CAROLINE THAT I LIKE HER, SHE ASKED ME OUT TO COFFEE!
PITY DATE.
IT IS NOT A "PITY DATE"!
LOOK, THERE'S NO SHAME IN IT...
IT'S CLASSIC DATING STRATEGY-- GET 'EM TO FEEL SORRY FOR YOU! MAKE 'EM WANT TO TAKE CARE OF YOU!
LORD, I PITY YOU.
ONCE, I FAKED A HEAD WOUND FOR SIX MONTHS!
e-mail ThatchMail@aol.com
JCHESIK
CREATORS SYNDICATE © 1997 Jeff Stahl
6/24

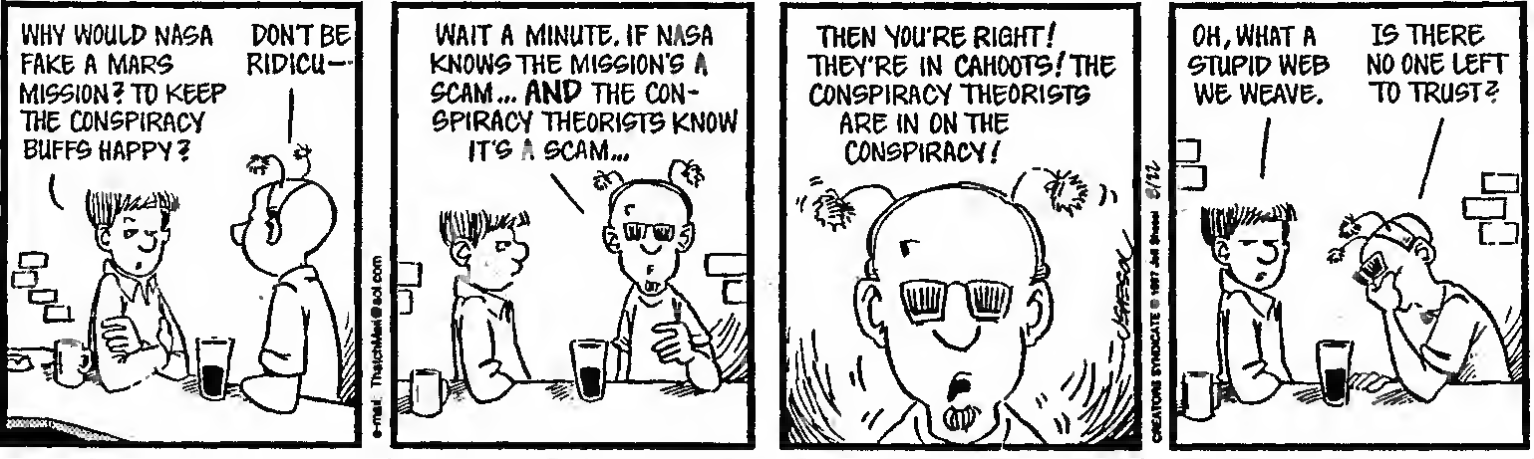

ANY REGRETS ABOUT YOUR LITTLE OUTBURST?
YOU MEAN, WHEN I ADMITTED I WAS INTERESTED IN YOU?
e-mail ThatchMail@aol.com
NOT AT ALL. STILL, MY FRIEND TELLS ME I BROKE "THE RULES."
COME ON, NOW... I NEVER PUT ANY STOCK IN THAT STUFF...
OH, GOOD! ME, EITHER!
CREATORS SYNDICATE © 1997 Jeff Stahl 6/27
NOT WHEN I'VE GOT "COSMO."
"MEETING MR. RIGHT: ARE YOU THIN ENOUGH?"
COSMO

YOU WORK AT THE WHITE HOUSE? THAT MUST BE FRUSTRATING...
FRUSTRATING?
WELL, THE BIG MAN'S PARALYZED BY SCANDAL, ISN'T HE?
THE PRESIDENT IS NEVER PARALYZED. BOLD EXECUTIVE ACTION MAY BE OUT...
e-mail: TheJoeMale@aol.com
J.SHESOL
BUT HE CAN STILL POUND THE BULLY PULPIT. YOU KNOW— "ASK WHAT YOU CAN DO FOR YOUR COUNTRY" KINDA STUFF...
CREATORS SYNDICATE © 1997 Jeff Shesol 6/20
AMERICA! LET US RESOLVE... TO EAT... OUR... VEGETABLES!
HEAR HEAR.
CRUNCH CRUNCH CRUNCH
PORK RINDS

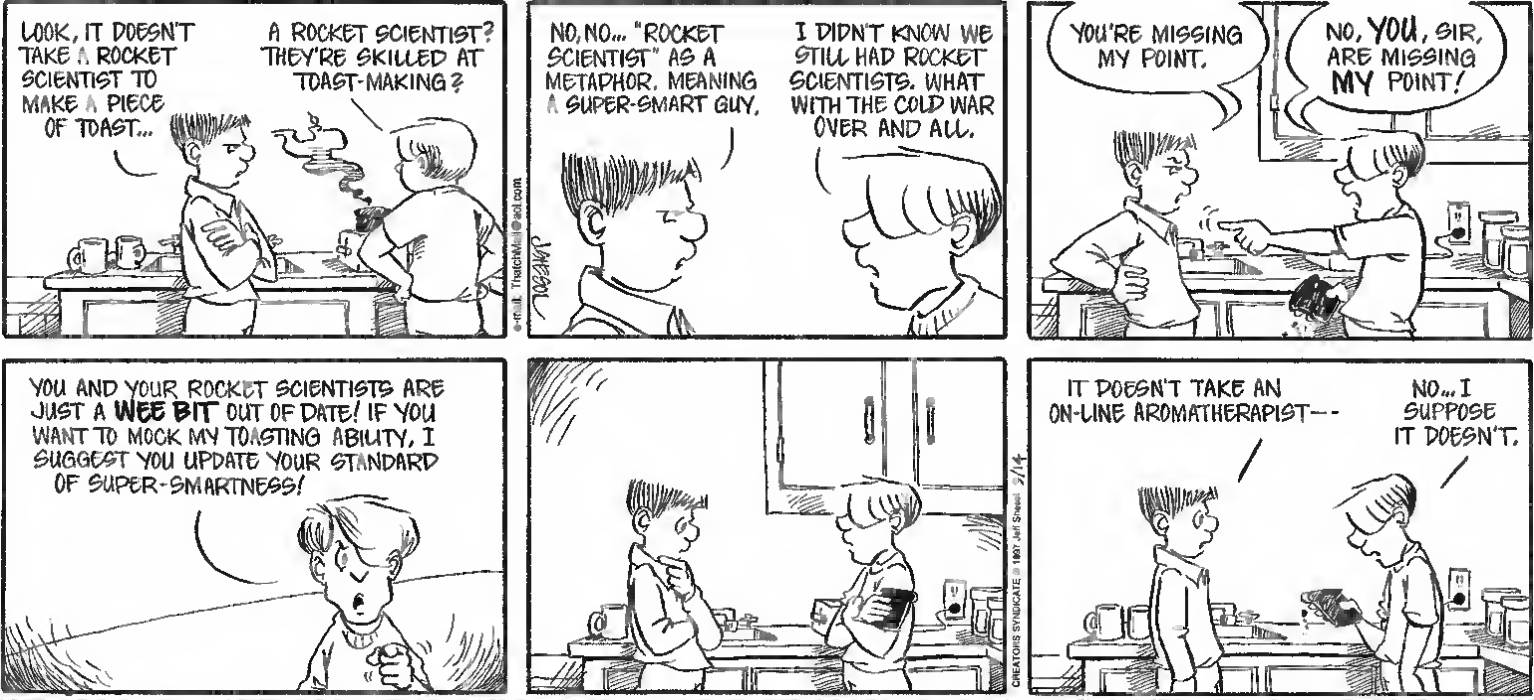
LET ME GET THIS STRAIGHT... NASA SENDS "PATHFINDER" ALL THE WAY TO MARS... FOR A BUNCH OF ROCKS?
e-mail: ThatchMail@aol.com
RIGHT. WELL, I AIN'T BUYIN'. AFTER ALL, DON'T WE HAVE PLENTY OF GOOD ROCKS HERE ON TERRA FIRMA?
SPIRO--
NO, THATCHER, SOMETHING SMELLS FUNNY HERE. THE AIR IS HEAVY WITH MYSTERY...
JSHESOL
AND FOUL WITH THE STENCH OF CONSPIRACY!
FALSE ALARM... JUST A BURNT POPTART.
SMACK!
CREATORS SYNDICATE © 1997 JeffBrown 8/18

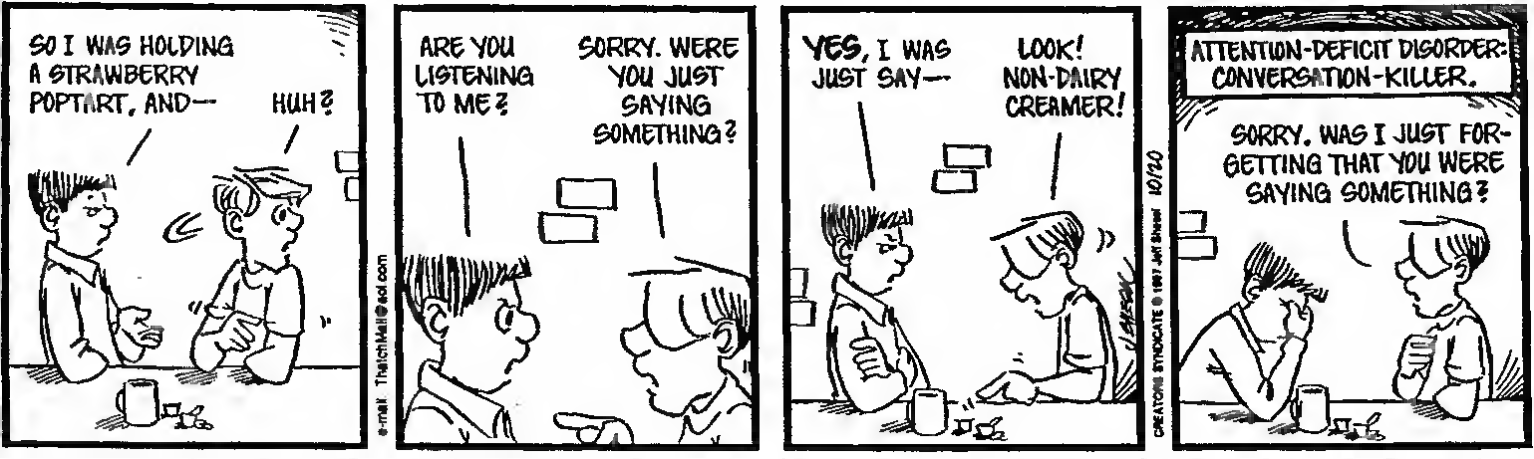
OK, THEN, INDULGE ME. WHAT'S THE REAL STORY BEHIND THE MARS MISSION?
YOU WANT THE TRUTH?
YOU CAN'T HANDLE THE TRUTH! NEITHER CAN YOUR MAINSTREAM MEDIA... YOUR CNNs AND NBCs...
e-mail: TrailerMail@aol.com
FOR THE REAL STORY, ONE MUST DIG -- DOWN, DEEP DOWN, INTO THE DARKEST RECESSES OF THE INTERNET...
JGHESQUIERE
LOOK, JUST TELL ME --
YOU WANT UNSUBSTANTIATED RUMOR? YOU CAN'T HANDLE UNSUBSTANTIATED RUMOR!
CREATORS SYNDICATE © 1997 Jim Sheer 8/19

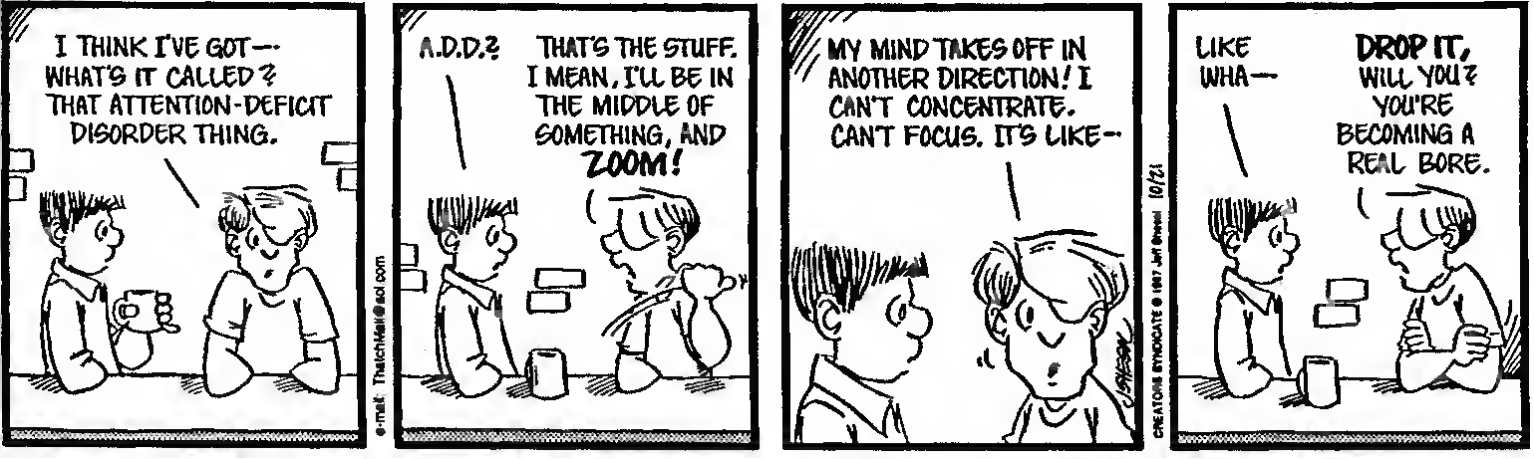

ACCORDING TO MY SOURCES, THE MARTIAN "ROCKS" AREN'T REALLY ROCKS AT ALL...
NO?
NO. THEY MAY LOOK LIKE ROCKS TO YOU AND ME, THATCH. BUT IN REALITY...
e-mail: ThatchMail@aol.com
THEY'RE LIVING CREATURES! INTELLIGENT CREATURES! I MEAN, THESE "ROCKS" MAKE YOURS TRULY LOOK LIKE A HALF-WIT!
CREATORS SYNDICATE © 1997 Jeff Stahl 6/20
IMAGINE.
OF COURSE, I NEVER DID TEST WELL...

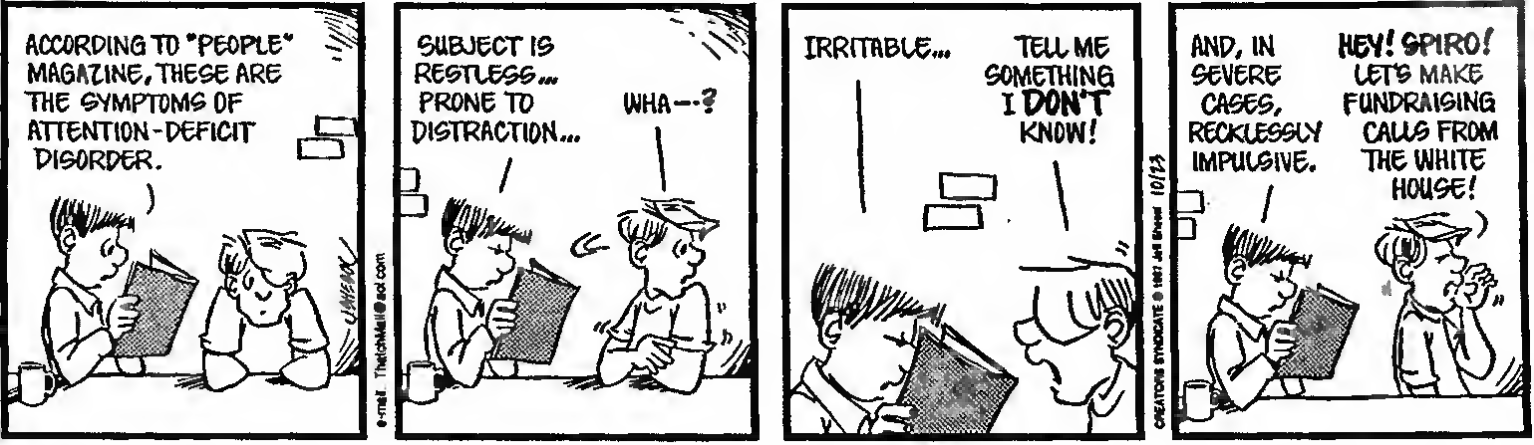

WHY WOULD NASA FAKE A MARS MISSION? TO KEEP THE CONSPIRACY BUFFS HAPPY?
DON'T BE RIDICU—
e-mail: ThatchMan@aol.com
WAIT A MINUTE. IF NASA KNOWS THE MISSION'S A SCAM... AND THE CONSPIRACY THEORISTS KNOW IT'S A SCAM...
THEN YOU'RE RIGHT! THEY'RE IN CAHOOTS! THE CONSPIRACY THEORISTS ARE IN ON THE CONSPIRACY!
CREATORS SYNDICATE © 1997 Jeff Stahler 8/12
OH, WHAT A STUPID WEB WE WEAVE.
IS THERE NO ONE LEFT TO TRUST?

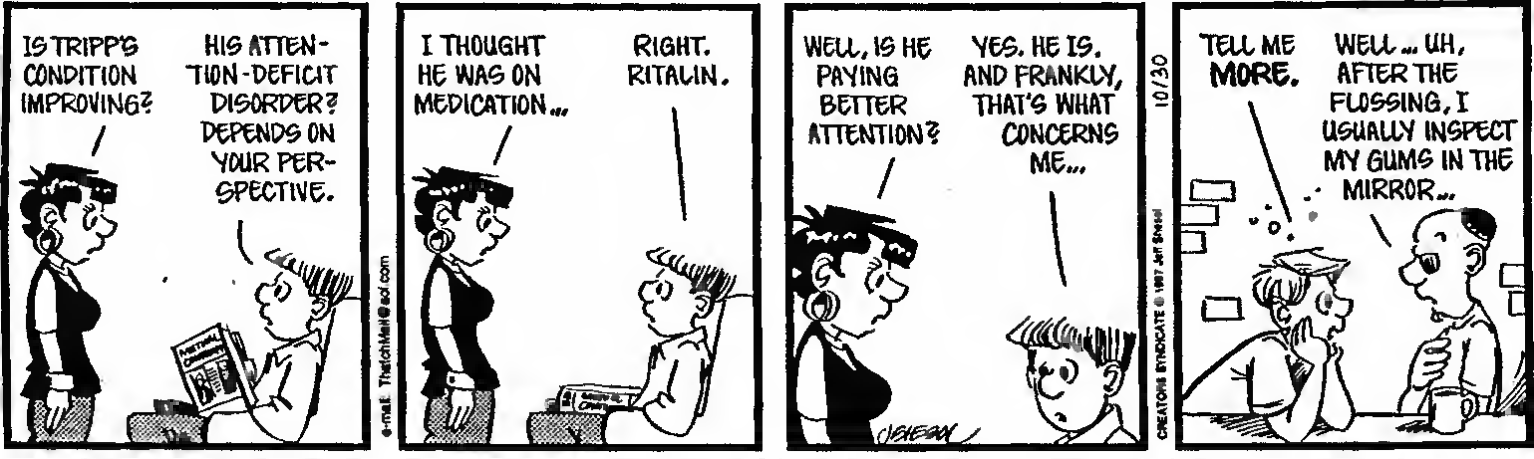
THE CONSPIRACY THEORISTS ARE IN ON THE CONSPIRACY?
RIGHT UP TO THEIR NOSES.
e-mail: TheDeMail@aol.com
I NEVER DID TRUST THOSE GUYS, ANYWAY. ALL THEIR WACKO WEB SITES AND NUTTY NEWSLETTERS...
AREN'T YOU A CONSPIRACY THEORIST?
WAIT A MINUTE— I AM A CONSPIRACY THEORIST!
CREATORS SYNDICATE © 1997 Jeff Stahl 6/23
AND AREN'T YOU ACTING A LITTLE SUSPICIOUS?
GOOD GOD! I'M HIDING SOMETHING, AREN'T I?!

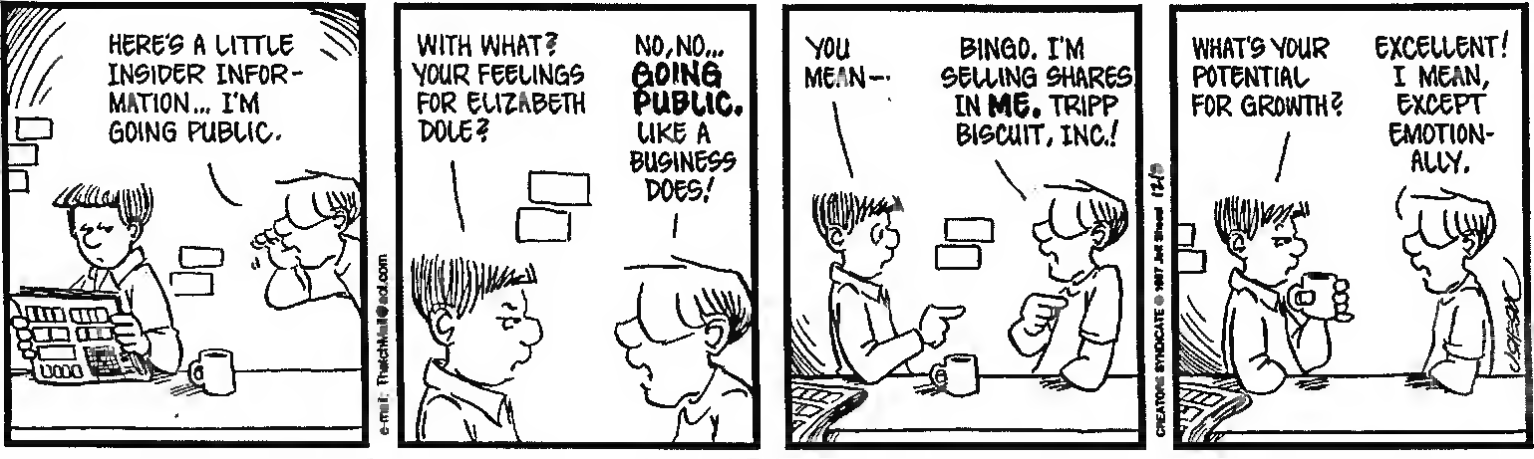

LOOK, IT DOESN'T TAKE A ROCKET SCIENTIST TO MAKE A PIECE OF TOAST...
A ROCKET SCIENTIST? THEY'RE SKILLED AT TOAST-MAKING?
©TruL ThatchMail@aol.com
NO, NO... "ROCKET SCIENTIST" AS A METAPHOR, MEANING A SUPER-SMART GUY.
I DIDN'T KNOW WE STILL HAD ROCKET SCIENTISTS. WHAT WITH THE COLD WAR OVER AND ALL.
YOU'RE MISSING MY POINT.
NO, YOU, SIR, ARE MISSING MY POINT!
YOU AND YOUR ROCKET SCIENTISTS ARE JUST A WEE BIT OUT OF DATE! IF YOU WANT TO MOCK MY TOASTING ABILITY, I SUGGEST YOU UPDATE YOUR STANDARD OF SUPER-SMARTNESS!
IT DOESN'T TAKE AN ON-LINE AROMATHERAPIST--
NO... I SUPPOSE IT DOESN'T.
CREATORS SYNDICATE © 1997 Jeff Stahler 5/14

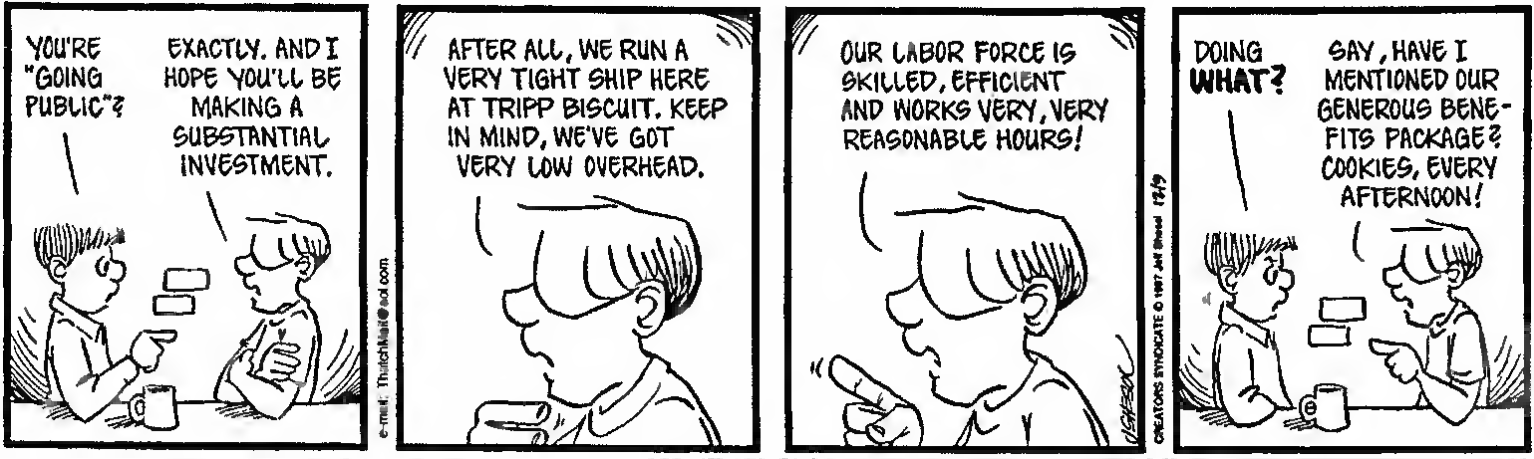

SO I WAS HOLDING A STRAWBERRY POPTART, AND—
HUH?
e-mail: ThatchMail@aol.com
ARE YOU LISTENING TO ME?
SORRY. WERE YOU JUST SAYING SOMETHING?
YES, I WAS JUST SAY—
LOOK! NON-DAIRY CREAMER!
CREATORS SYNDICATE © 1997 Jeff Stahler 10/30
ATTENTION-DEFICIT DISORDER: CONVERSATION-KILLER.
SORRY. WAS I JUST FORGETTING THAT YOU WERE SAYING SOMETHING?


I THINK I'VE GOT— WHAT'S IT CALLED? THAT ATTENTION-DEFICIT DISORDER THING.
A.D.D.?
THAT'S THE STUFF. I MEAN, I'LL BE IN THE MIDDLE OF SOMETHING, AND ZOOM!
MY MIND TAKES OFF IN ANOTHER DIRECTION! I CAN'T CONCENTRATE. CAN'T FOCUS. IT'S LIKE—
LIKE WHA—
DROP IT, WILL YOU? YOU'RE BECOMING A REAL BORE.
e-mail: ThatchMail@aol.com
CREATORS SYNDICATE © 1997 JEFF DWINELL 10/21

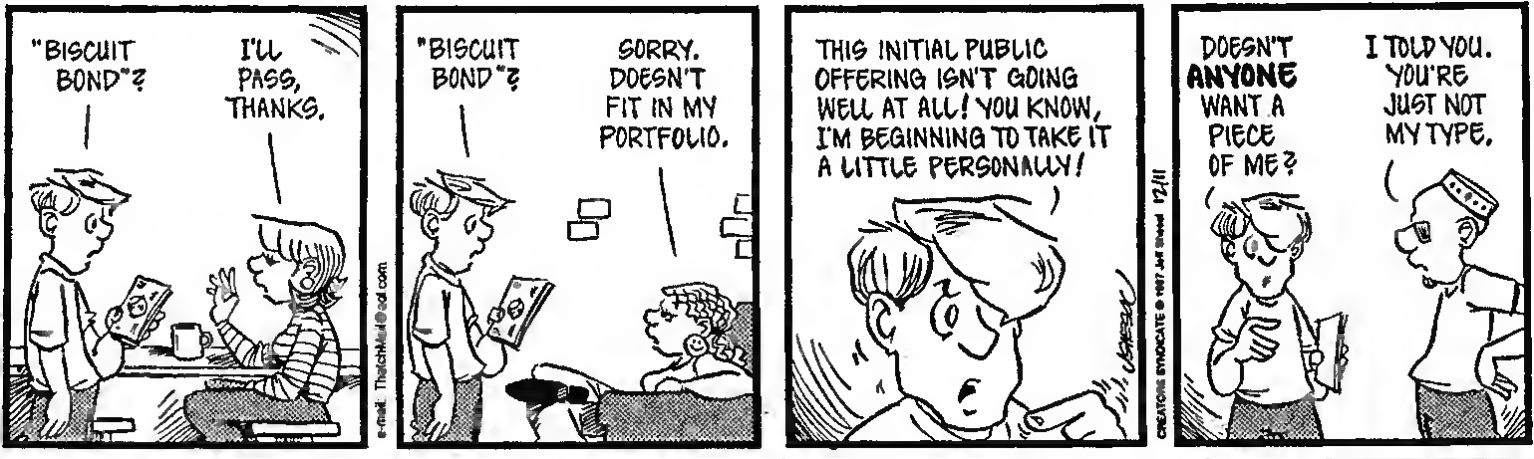

ACCORDING TO "PEOPLE" MAGAZINE, THESE ARE THE SYMPTOMS OF ATTENTION-DEFICIT DISORDER.
SUBJECT IS RESTLESS... PRONE TO DISTRACTION...
WHA--?
e-mail: TheToeMail@aol.com
IRRITABLE...
TELL ME SOMETHING I DON'T KNOW!
CREATORS SYNDICATE © 1997 Joe Shuster 10/13
AND, IN SEVERE CASES, RECKLESSLY IMPULSIVE.
HEY! SPIRO! LET'S MAKE FUNDRAISING CALLS FROM THE WHITE HOUSE!

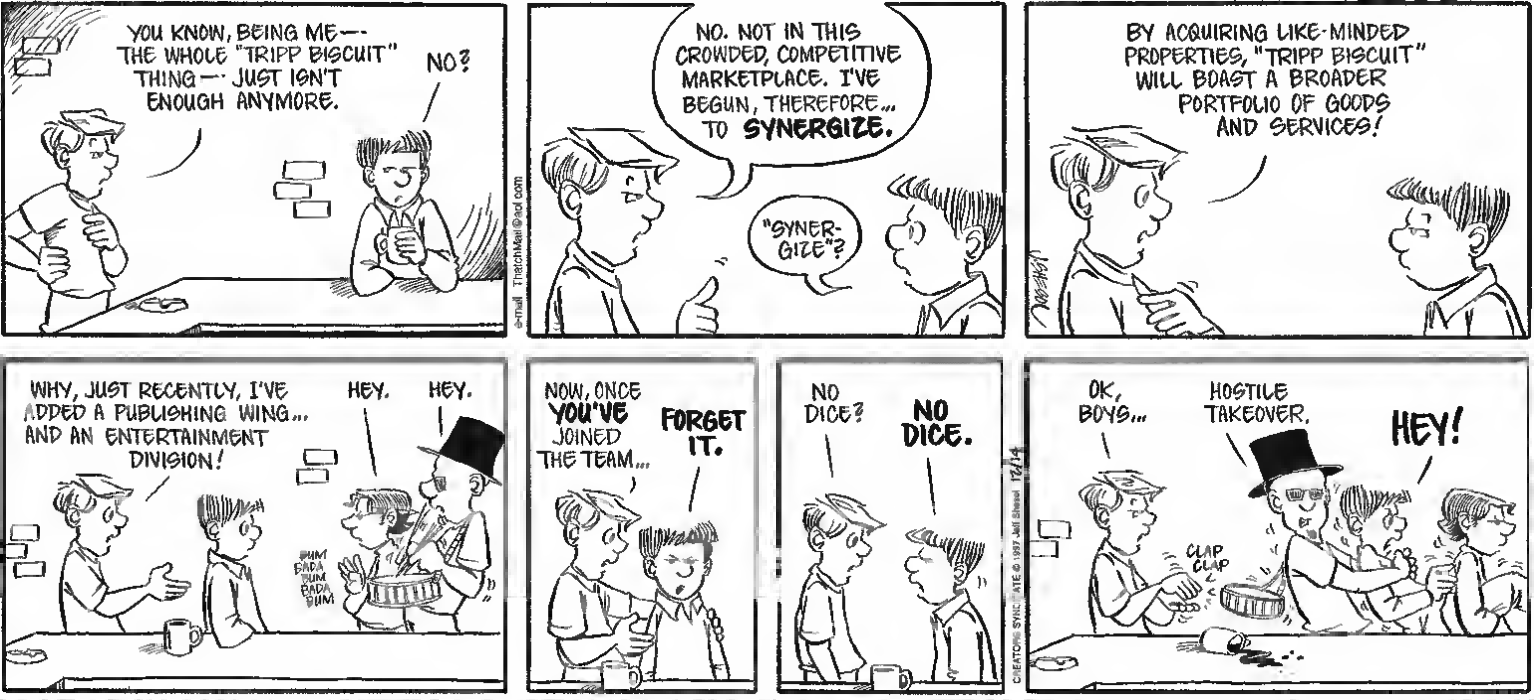

IS TRIPP'S CONDITION IMPROVING?
HIS ATTENTION-DEFICIT DISORDER? DEPENDS ON YOUR PERSPECTIVE.
e-mail: ThatchMail@aol.com
I THOUGHT HE WAS ON MEDICATION...
RIGHT. RITALIN.
WELL, IS HE PAYING BETTER ATTENTION?
YES. HE IS. AND FRANKLY, THAT'S WHAT CONCERNS ME...
10/30
CREATORS SYNDICATE © 1997 Jeff Stahl
TELL ME MORE.
WELL... UH, AFTER THE FLOSSING, I USUALLY INSPECT MY GUMS IN THE MIRROR...


HERE'S A LITTLE INSIDER INFORMATION... I'M GOING PUBLIC.
e-mail: TheDkMail@aol.com
WITH WHAT? YOUR FEELINGS FOR ELIZABETH DOLE?
NO, NO... GOING PUBLIC. LIKE A BUSINESS DOES!
YOU MEAN--
BINGO. I'M SELLING SHARES IN ME. TRIPP BISCUIT, INC.!
CREATORS SYNDICATE © 1997 Jeff Stahl 12/5
WHAT'S YOUR POTENTIAL FOR GROWTH?
EXCELLENT! I MEAN, EXCEPT EMOTIONALLY.

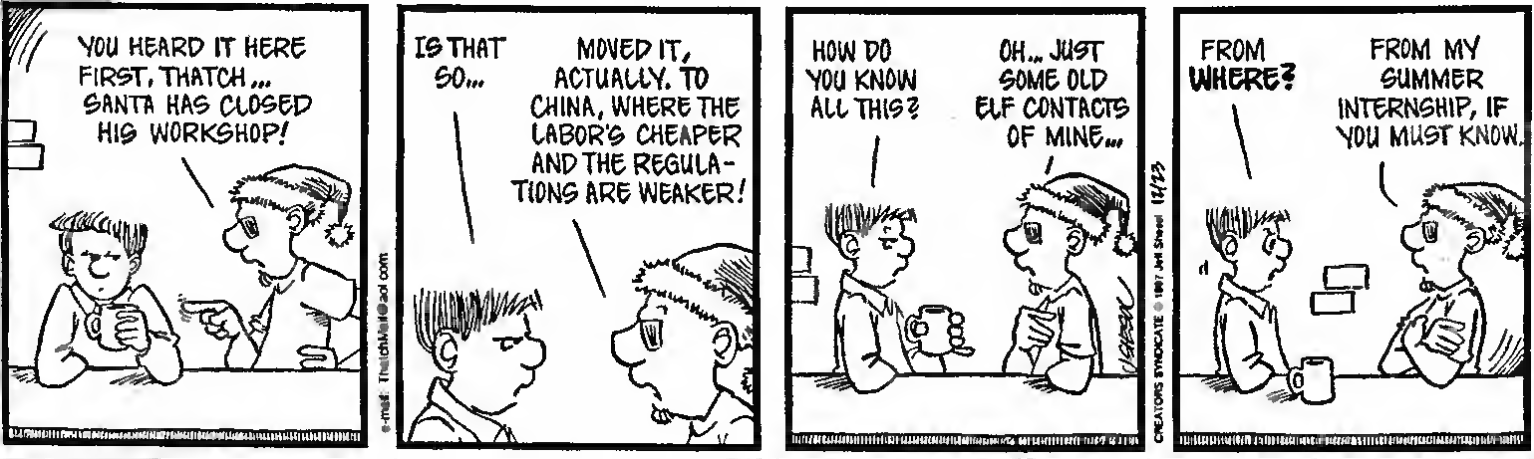

YOU'RE "GOING PUBLIC"?
EXACTLY. AND I HOPE YOU'LL BE MAKING A SUBSTANTIAL INVESTMENT.
e-mail: Thatchkat@aol.com
AFTER ALL, WE RUN A VERY TIGHT SHIP HERE AT TRIPP BISCUIT. KEEP IN MIND, WE'VE GOT VERY LOW OVERHEAD.
OUR LABOR FORCE IS SKILLED, EFFICIENT AND WORKS VERY, VERY REASONABLE HOURS!
CREATORS SYNDICATE © 1997 Jeff Stahler 12/9
DOING WHAT?
SAY, HAVE I MENTIONED OUR GENEROUS BENEFITS PACKAGE? COOKIES, EVERY AFTERNOON!

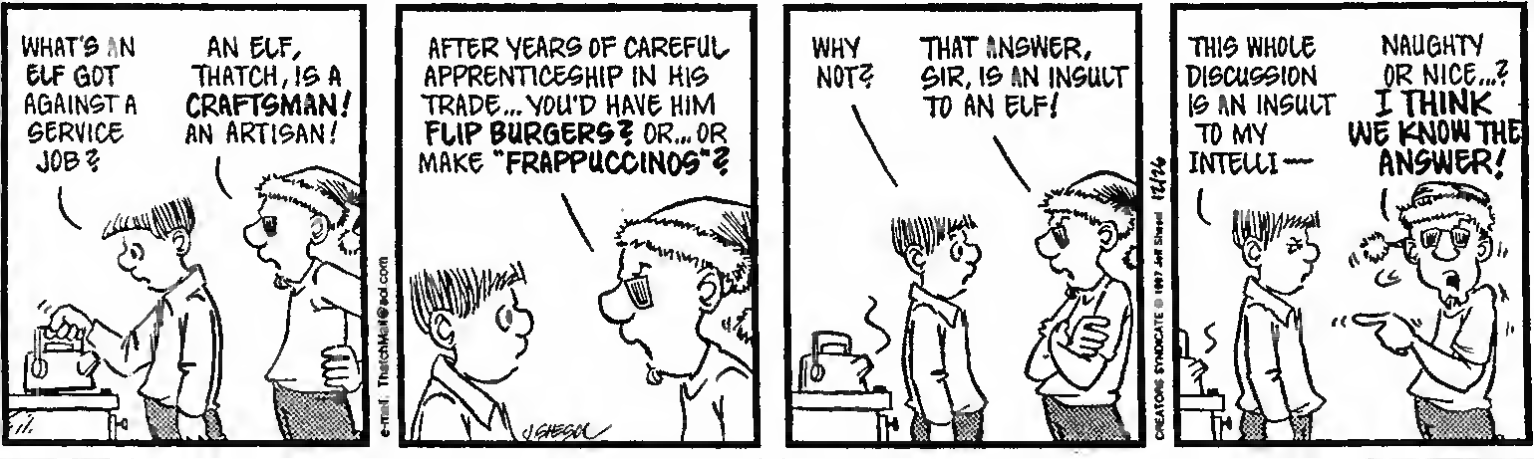
IS IT TIME?
IT'S TIME.
OK, INVESTORS, RALLY 'ROUND. FOR THE INITIAL PUBLIC OFFERING... OF TRIPP BISCUIT, INC.!
e-mail: ThatchMail@aol.com
APPARENTLY THEY'VE READ YOUR ANNUAL REPORT.
$1500 FOR "HAIR-RELATED EXPENSES"?
CREATORS SYNDICATE © 1997 Jeff Stahl 12/10

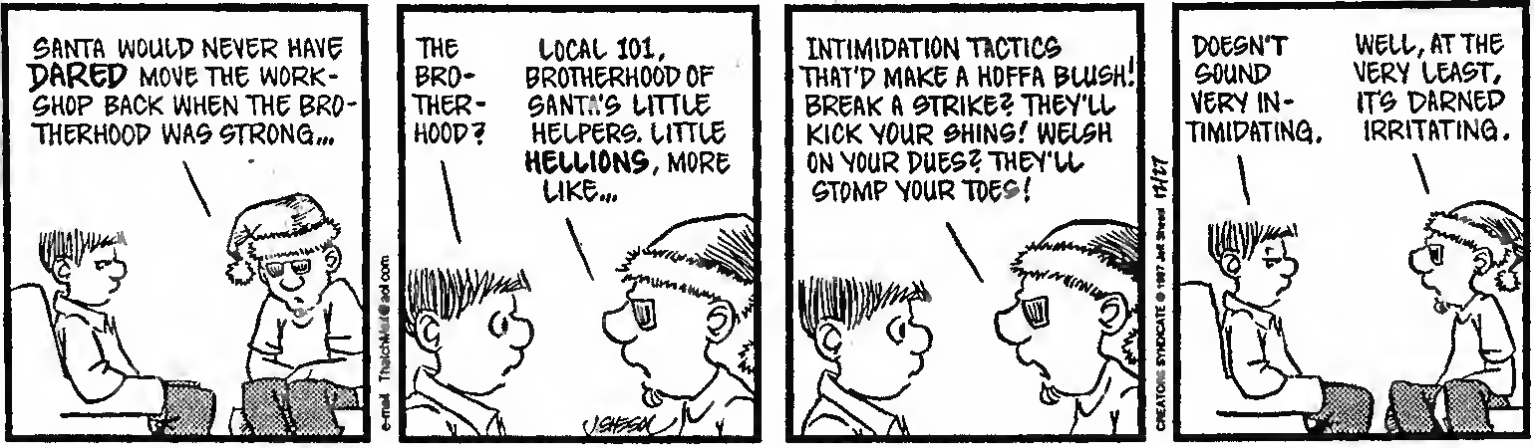

"BISCUIT BOND"?
I'LL PASS, THANKS.
e-mail: ThatchHall@aol.com
"BISCUIT BOND"?
SORRY. DOESN'T FIT IN MY PORTFOLIO.
THIS INITIAL PUBLIC OFFERING ISN'T GOING WELL AT ALL! YOU KNOW, I'M BEGINNING TO TAKE IT A LITTLE PERSONALLY!
CREATORS SYNDICATE © 1997 Jeff Stahl 12/11
DOESN'T ANYONE WANT A PIECE OF ME?
I TOLD YOU. YOU'RE JUST NOT MY TYPE.

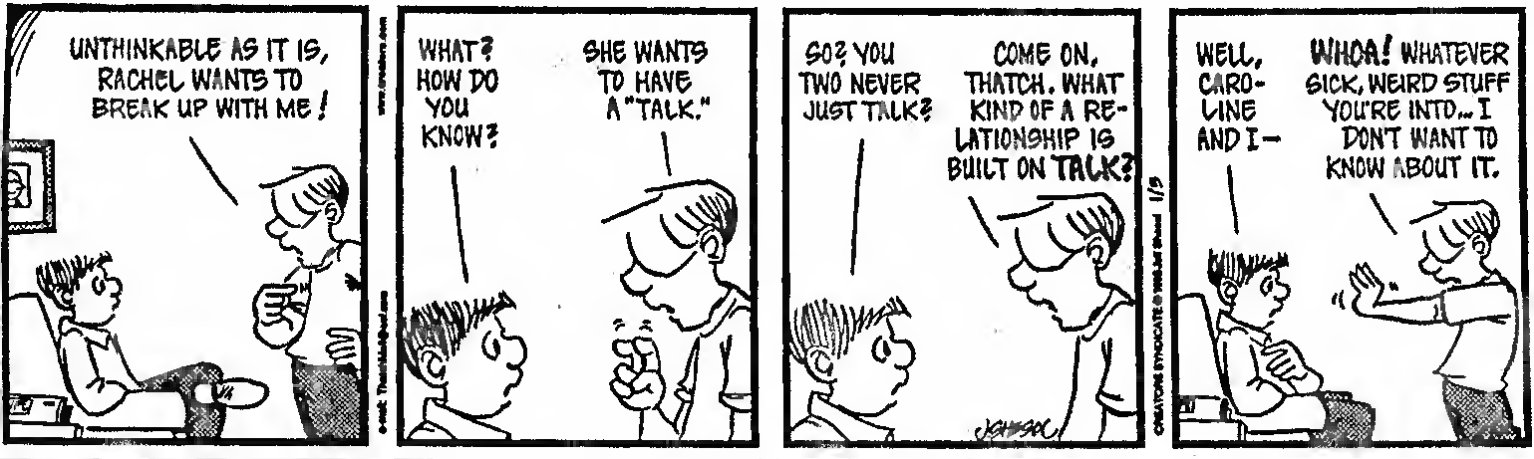

YOU KNOW, BEING ME— THE WHOLE "TRIPP BISCUIT" THING— JUST ISN'T ENOUGH ANYMORE.
NO?
NO. NOT IN THIS CROWDED, COMPETITIVE MARKETPLACE. I'VE BEGUN, THEREFORE... TO SYNERGIZE.
"SYNER-GIZE"?
BY ACQUIRING LIKE-MINDED PROPERTIES, "TRIPP BISCUIT" WILL BOAST A BROADER PORTFOLIO OF GOODS AND SERVICES!
WHY, JUST RECENTLY, I'VE ADDED A PUBLISHING WING... AND AN ENTERTAINMENT DIVISION!
HEY.
HEY.
BUM BADA BUM BADA BUM
NOW, ONCE YOU'VE JOINED THE TEAM...
FORGET IT.
NO DICE?
NO DICE.
OK, BOYS...
HOSTILE TAKEOVER.
HEY!
CLAP CLAP
e-mail: ThatchMail@aol.com
CREATORS SYNDICATE © 1997 Jeff Stahler
12/14

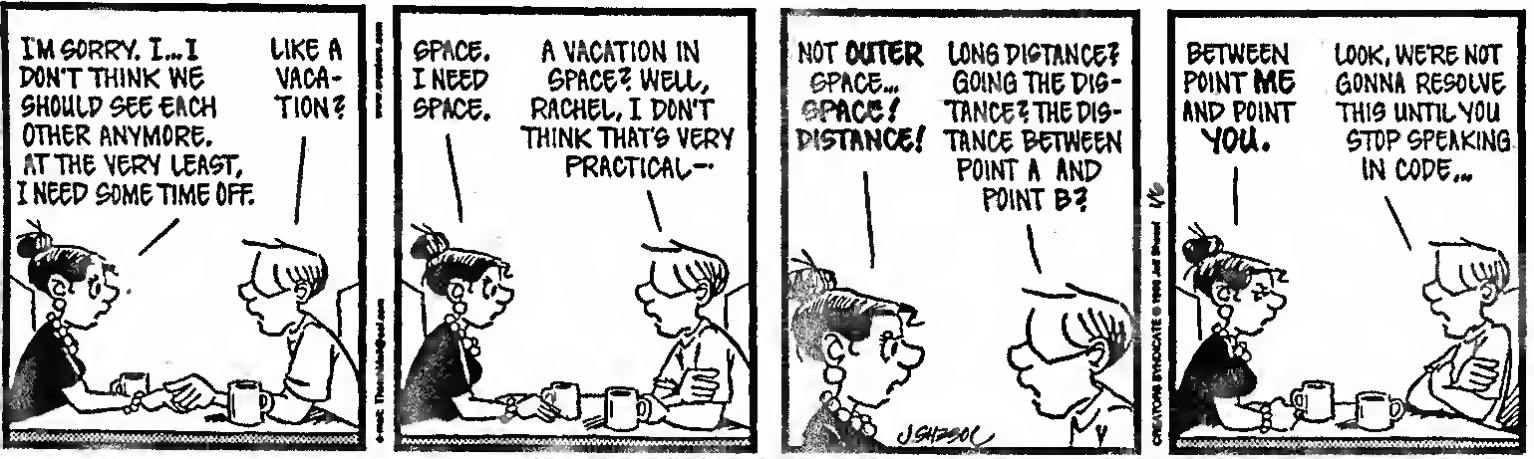
LOOK AT MY HAT. THE TAG, SPECIFICALLY.
"MADE IN CHINA"?
EXACTLY! TEN YEARS AGO, A HAT LIKE THIS WOULD HAVE BEEN MADE IN THE GOOD OL' NORTH POLE!
e-mail: ThatchMan@aol.com
THE NORTH POLE?
THAT'S RIGHT! BY ELVES! REAL, LIVE ELVES IN SANTA'S WORK-SHOP!
CREATORS SYNDICATE © 1997 Jeff Stahl
12/22
LET ME SHARE SOME-THING, VIRGINIA...
NO ELVES IN CHINA, BELIEVE YOU ME!

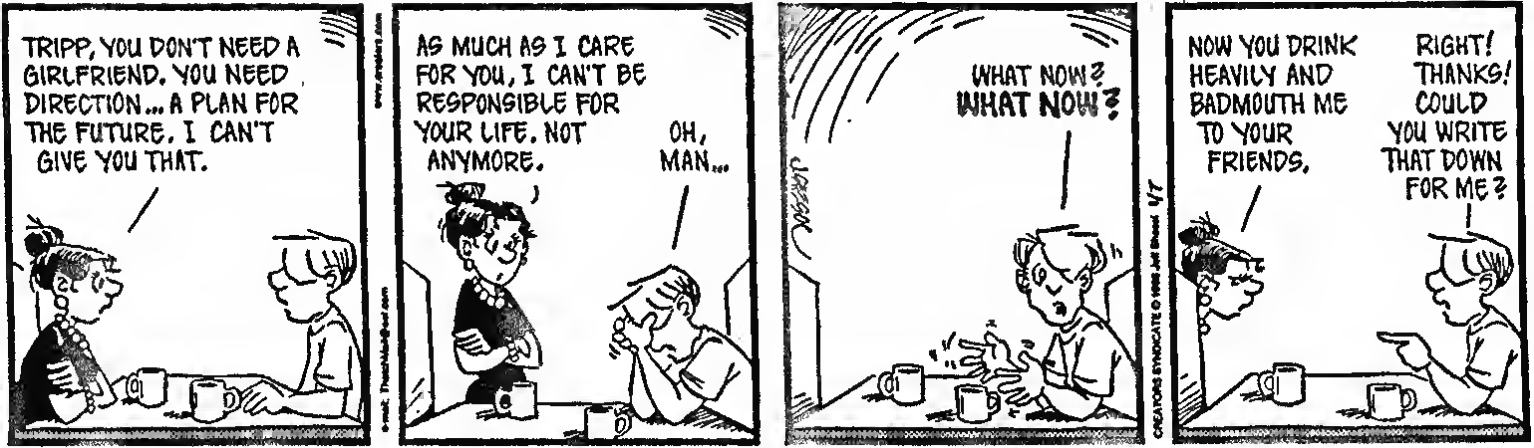

YOU HEARD IT HERE FIRST, THATCH... SANTA HAS CLOSED HIS WORKSHOP!
IS THAT SO...
MOVED IT, ACTUALLY. TO CHINA, WHERE THE LABOR'S CHEAPER AND THE REGULATIONS ARE WEAKER!
HOW DO YOU KNOW ALL THIS?
OH... JUST SOME OLD ELF CONTACTS OF MINE...
FROM WHERE?
FROM MY SUMMER INTERNSHIP, IF YOU MUST KNOW.
e-mail: ThatchMail@aol.com
CREATORS SYNDICATE © 1997 Jeff Stahl 12/23


WHAT'S AN ELF GOT AGAINST A SERVICE JOB?
AN ELF, THATCH, IS A CRAFTSMAN! AN ARTISAN!
e-mail: ThatchMail@aol.com
AFTER YEARS OF CAREFUL APPRENTICESHIP IN HIS TRADE... YOU'D HAVE HIM FLIP BURGERS? OR... OR MAKE "FRAPPUCCINOS"?
J.GHESQUIERE
WHY NOT?
THAT ANSWER, SIR, IS AN INSULT TO AN ELF!
CREATORS SYNDICATE © 1997 Jeff Shesol 12/24
THIS WHOLE DISCUSSION IS AN INSULT TO MY INTELLI—
NAUGHTY OR NICE...? I THINK WE KNOW THE ANSWER!


SANTA WOULD NEVER HAVE DARED MOVE THE WORKSHOP BACK WHEN THE BROTHERHOOD WAS STRONG...
THE BROTHERHOOD?
LOCAL 101, BROTHERHOOD OF SANTA'S LITTLE HELPERS. LITTLE HELLIONS, MORE LIKE...
INTIMIDATION TACTICS THAT'D MAKE A HOFFA BLUSH! BREAK A STRIKE? THEY'LL KICK YOUR SHINS! WELSH ON YOUR DUES? THEY'LL STOMP YOUR TOES!
DOESN'T SOUND VERY INTIMIDATING.
WELL, AT THE VERY LEAST, IT'S DARNED IRRITATING.
e-mail ThatchMail@aol.com
CREATORS SYNDICATE © 1997 Jeff Stahl 11/27


UNTHINKABLE AS IT IS, RACHEL WANTS TO BREAK UP WITH ME!
WHAT? HOW DO YOU KNOW?
SHE WANTS TO HAVE A "TALK."
SO? YOU TWO NEVER JUST TALK?
COME ON, THATCH. WHAT KIND OF A RELATIONSHIP IS BUILT ON TALK?
WELL, CAROLINE AND I—
WHOA! WHATEVER SICK, WEIRD STUFF YOU'RE INTO... I DON'T WANT TO KNOW ABOUT IT.


I'M SORRY. I...I DON'T THINK WE SHOULD SEE EACH OTHER ANYMORE. AT THE VERY LEAST, I NEED SOME TIME OFF.
LIKE A VACATION?
SPACE. I NEED SPACE.
A VACATION IN SPACE? WELL, RACHEL, I DON'T THINK THAT'S VERY PRACTICAL--
NOT OUTER SPACE... SPACE! DISTANCE!
LONG DISTANCE? GOING THE DISTANCE? THE DISTANCE BETWEEN POINT A AND POINT B?
BETWEEN POINT ME AND POINT YOU.
LOOK, WE'RE NOT GONNA RESOLVE THIS UNTIL YOU STOP SPEAKING IN CODE...

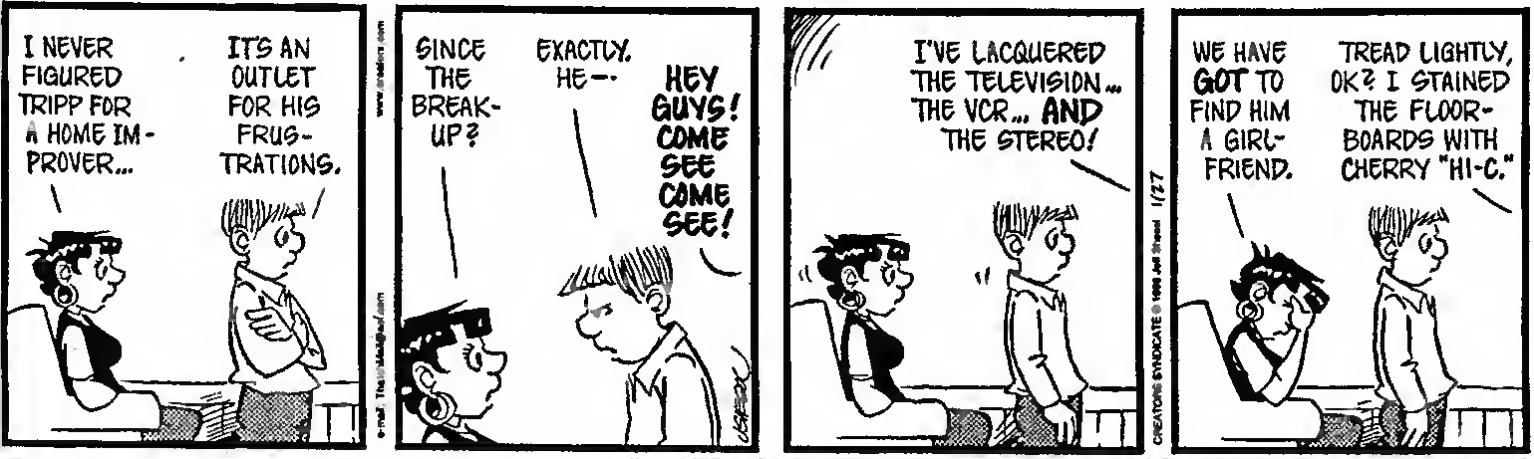

TRIPP, YOU DON'T NEED A GIRLFRIEND. YOU NEED DIRECTION... A PLAN FOR THE FUTURE. I CAN'T GIVE YOU THAT.
AS MUCH AS I CARE FOR YOU, I CAN'T BE RESPONSIBLE FOR YOUR LIFE. NOT ANYMORE.
OH, MAN...
WHAT NOW? WHAT NOW?
NOW YOU DRINK HEAVILY AND BADMOUTH ME TO YOUR FRIENDS.
RIGHT! THANKS! COULD YOU WRITE THAT DOWN FOR ME?

I AM A SPECIAL PERSON, RACHEL... TOO SPECIAL TO BE TOSSED ON THE SCRAP-HEAP LIKE SOME WORN-OUT PLAYTHING!
YOU CAN BREAK UP WITH ME... BUT YOU CANNOT ROB ME OF MY DIGNITY!
ONLY MY FRIENDS CAN DO THAT.
YOU GO, GIRL!
1/3

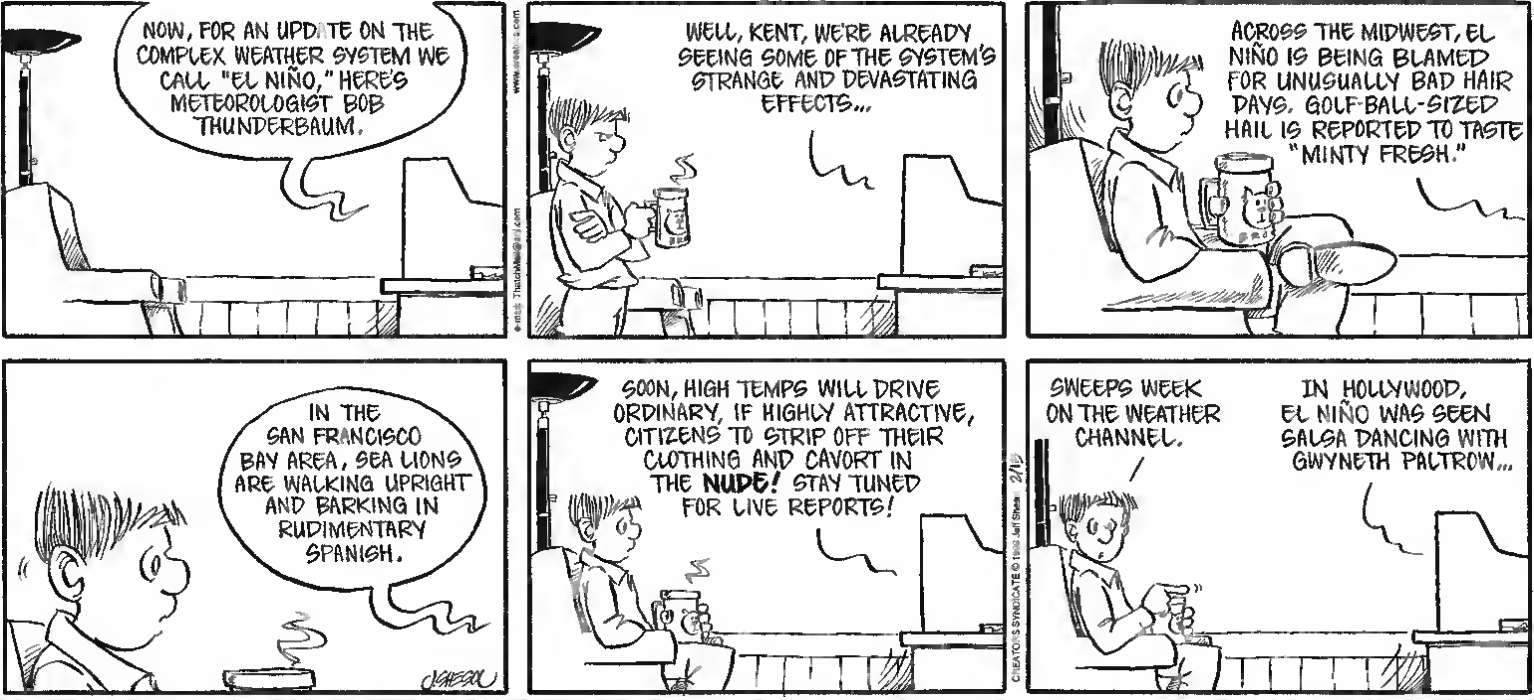
I STILL CAN'T BELIEVE IT. TWO YEARS WITH RACHEL... AND NOW I'M DUMPED.
DUMPED.
HOW YA HOLDIN' UP, PAL?
OK, ACTUALLY. I MEAN, IT WAS ROUGH GOING FOR AWHILE THERE...
BUT I'M OVER HER NOW. TOTALLY. AND LET ME TELL YOU, IT FEELS GOOD TO PUT ALL THAT PAIN BEHIND ME!
IT'S BEEN TWENTY MINUTES.
WELL, THE FIRST FOUR OR FIVE WERE THE HARDEST.

THATCH
by JEFF SHESOL
A POLICY IS BORN
AN AMERICAN JOURNEY
THE BODY POLITIC HAS A PROBLEM.
"JUMBO"? THEY CALL THIS A JUMBO EGG? IT'S "LARGE," AT BEST!
BLAME IS ASSESSED.
THE USDA, THE JACKBOOTED, BLACK-APRONED THUGS OF THE USDA.
FOCUS GROUPS REVEAL THE DEPTH OF PUBLIC SENTIMENT.
ON A SCALE OF ONE TO TEN, HOW MUCH DO YOU RESENT THE "RECOMMENDED DAILY ALLOWANCE"?
TEN!
THIRTY-ONE!
SOON, LOBBYISTS LOBBY...
WHILE YOU'RE AT IT, SENATOR, WE URGE DEREGULATION OF TAINTED CLAMS.
PROPOSALS ARE PROPOSED AND PASSED...
THE CULINARY DECENCY ACT GETS THE GOVERNMENT OUT OF AMERICA'S KITCHENS!
...AND THE BODY POLITIC HAS A NEW PROBLEM.
DO THESE CLAMS TASTE FUNNY TO YOU?
DARN THAT DO-NOTHING USDA!
BANG

BOY... YOU'RE ON QUITE A HOME IMPROVEMENT KICK...
I'M REBUILDING MY SELF-ESTEEM, THATCH.
PARDON?
AFTER RACHEL DUMPED ME, I FELT HELPLESS. POWERLESS.
HOME IMPROVEMENT, HOWEVER, GIVES ME A SENSE OF CONTROL. NOTHING LIFTS THE SPIRITS LIKE A JOB WELL-DONE!
YOU WALLPAPERED THE FRIDGE SHUT.
FRANKLY, A SMALL PRICE TO PAY FOR MY EMOTIONAL HEALTH.
CREATORS SYNDICATE © 1998 Jeff Stinett 11/26


I NEVER FIGURED TRIPP FOR A HOME IM-PROVER...
IT'S AN OUTLET FOR HIS FRUS-TRATIONS.
SINCE THE BREAK-UP?
EXACTLY. HE--
HEY GUYS! COME SEE COME SEE!
I'VE LACQUERED THE TELEVISION... THE VCR... AND THE STEREO!
WE HAVE GOT TO FIND HIM A GIRL-FRIEND.
TREAD LIGHTLY, OK? I STAINED THE FLOOR-BOARDS WITH CHERRY "HI-C."
www.creators.com
CREATORS SYNDICATE © 1999 Jeff Stahl 1/27

MORE HOME IMPROVE-MENTS?
RIGHT HERE, I'VE CREATED A LITTLE SPOT I CALL THE "COMFORT ZONE."
www.rmdeets.com
e-mail: TheInkblot@aol.com
I'VE INSTALLED LEATHER LOUNGE CHAIRS, TRACK LIGHTING AND BUILT-IN BOOKSHELVES. AND... SAVING THE BEST FOR LAST...
A FIRE-PLACE!
CREATORS SYNDICATE © 1998 Jeff Stahl 11/26
IN THE LINEN CLOSET?
I DIDN'T SAY IT WAS A WORKING FIREPLACE.


NOW, FOR AN UPDATE ON THE COMPLEX WEATHER SYSTEM WE CALL "EL NIÑO," HERE'S METEOROLOGIST BOB THUNDERBAUM.
WELL, KENT, WE'RE ALREADY SEEING SOME OF THE SYSTEM'S STRANGE AND DEVASTATING EFFECTS...
ACROSS THE MIDWEST, EL NIÑO IS BEING BLAMED FOR UNUSUALLY BAD HAIR DAYS. GOLF-BALL-SIZED HAIL IS REPORTED TO TASTE "MINTY FRESH."
IN THE SAN FRANCISCO BAY AREA, SEA LIONS ARE WALKING UPRIGHT AND BARKING IN RUDIMENTARY SPANISH.
SOON, HIGH TEMPS WILL DRIVE ORDINARY, IF HIGHLY ATTRACTIVE, CITIZENS TO STRIP OFF THEIR CLOTHING AND CAVORT IN THE NUDE! STAY TUNED FOR LIVE REPORTS!
SWEEPS WEEK ON THE WEATHER CHANNEL.
IN HOLLYWOOD, EL NIÑO WAS SEEN SALSA DANCING WITH GWYNETH PALTROW...
www.arlofi.com
© 1998 ThatArloGuy! .com
CREATORS SYNDICATE © 1998 Jeff Stine 2/15

CHILDREN OF THE '70s!
'80s!
'70s!
'80s!
KIDS... KIDS... WHAT'S ALL THE FUSS?
THATCH SAYS WE'RE PRODUCTS OF THE 1970s. I SAY WE'RE REAGAN'S PROGENY.
WELL, THERE'S A SIMPLE WAY TO FIND OUT. ON MY TV IS A '70s CLASSIC -- "GOOD TIMES," ON THE OTHER TV IS TYPICAL '80s FARE... "KNIGHT RIDER, GENTLEMEN?
DY-NO-MITE!
HEY! THIS IS THE ONE WHERE JIMMIE WALKER GETS ARRESTED.
WATCH OUT, KITTY! IT'S THAT WEIRD RED CAR!
A DECADE ROOTLESS... A GENERATION WITHOUT DEFINITION... BUT NO LONGER!
JOIN ME, THATCH... GIVE ME YOUR HAND...
HUHH?
WITH THESE MOOD RINGS, WE HEREBY CONSECRATE...
THE RETURN OF THE '70s!
AAAHHH!
BOY... YOURS WENT BLACK AWFUL FAST...